

Venice Preserv'd,

O R,

A Plot Discover'd.

A

TRAGEDY

As it is Acted at the

DUKE'S THEATRE.

Written by THOMAS OTWAY.

L O N D O N;

Printed for Benj. Tooke, at the Middle-Temple-Gate, in
Fleetstreet; and George Strahan, at the Golden Ball,
against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill. 1704.

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EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To Her GRACE the

DUTCHESSES

O F

PORTSMOUTH.

MADAM,

WERE it possible for me to let the World know how entirely your Grace's Goodness has devoted a poor Man to your Service; were there Words enough in Speech to express the mighty Sense I have of your great Bounty towards me; surely I should Write and Talk of it for ever: But your Grace has given me so large a Theme, and laid so very vast a Foundation, that Imagination wants Stock to Build upon it. I am as one Dumb when I would Speak of it; and when I strive to Write, I want a Scale of Thought sufficient to comprehend the Height of it. Forgive me then, Madam, (if as a poor Peasant once made a Present of an Apple to an Emperor) I bring this small Tribute, the humble Growth of my little Garden, and lay it at your Feet. Believe it is paid you with the utmost Gratitude: Believe that so long as I have

The Epistle Dedicatory.

Thought to remember how very much I owe your Generous Nature, I will ever have a Heart that shall be grateful for it too: Your Grace, next Heav'n, deserves it amply from me; That gave me Life, but on a hard Condition, till your extended Favour taught me to prize the Gift, and took the heavy Burthen it was clogg'd with from me; I mean, hard Fortune. When I had Enemies, that with Malicious Power kept back, and shaded me from those Royal Beams, whose Warmth is all I have, or hope to live by; Your Noble Pity and Compassion found me, where I was far cast backward from my Blessing; down in the Rear of Fortune; call'd me up, plac'd me in the Shine, and I have felt its Comfort. You have in that Restor'd me to my Native Right; for a steady Faith, and Loyalty to my Prince, was all the Inheritance my Father left me: And however hardly my ill Fortune deal with me, 'tis what I prize so well, that I ne'er Pawn'd it yet, and hope I ne'er shall part with it. Nature and Fortune were certainly in League when you were Born; and as the first took care to give you Beauty enough to Enslave the Hearts of all the World, so the other resolv'd to do its Merit Justice, that none but a Monarch, fit to Rule that World, should e'er Possess it; and in it he had an Empire. The Young Prince you have given him, by his Blooming Virtues, early declares the Mighty Stock he came from, and as you have taken all the Pious Care of a Dear Mother and a Prudent Guardian, to give him a Noble and Generous Education; may it succeed according to his Merits and your Wishes: May he grow up to be a Bulwark to his Illustrious Father, and a Patron

The Epistle Dedicatory.

to his Loyal Subjects; with Wisdom and Learning to Assist him, whenever call'd to his Councils, to Defend his Right against the Encroachments of Republicans in his Senates; to Cherish such Men as shall be able to Vindicate the Royal Cause; that good and fit Servants to the Crown, may never be lost for want of a Protector. May he have Courage and Conduct, fit to Fight his Battels Abroad, and Terrify his Rebels at Home; and that all these may be yet more sure, may he never, during the Spring-time of his Years, when those growing Virtues ought with Care to be cherish'd in order to their Ripening; may he never meet with Vicious Natures, or the Tongues of Faithless, Sordid, Insipid Flatterers, to Blast 'em: To conclude; may he be as great as the hand of Fortune (with his Honour) shall he be able to make him: And may your Grace, who are so good a Mistress, and so Noble a Patroness, never meet with a less grateful Servant, than,

Madam,

Your Grace's entirely

Devoted Creature,

THO. OTWAY.

Personæ Dramatis.

Duke of Venice.
 Priuli, Father to
 Belvidera, a Senator.
 Antonio, a fine Speaker in
 the Senate.

Mr. D. Williams.
 Mr. Bowman.
 Mr. Leigh.

BEdamar, the Spanish
 Ambassador.
 Jasseir.
 Pierre.
 Renault.
 Spinoza.
 Theodore.
 Eliot.
 Revillido.
 Durand.
 Mazzana.
 Bramveil.
 Ternon.
 Brabe.

Mr. Gillo.
 Mr. Betterton.
 Mr. Smith.
 Mr. Wilshire.
 Mr. Percival.

Conspirators.

Belvidera.
 Aquilina.

Mrs. Barry.
 Mrs. Currer.

Two Women, Attendants on Belvidera.
 Two Women, Servants to Aquilina.
 The Council of Ten.
 Officer. Guard. Friar.
 Executioner and Rabble.

PROLOGUE.

*I*N these Distracted Times, when each Man dreads
The Bloody Stratagems of busie Heads;
When we have Fear'd three Years we know not what,
Till Witnesses begin to die o'th' Rot,
What made our Poet meddle with a Plot?
Was't that he Fancy'd, for the very sake
And name of Plot, his trifling Play might take?
For there's not in't one Inch-board Evidence,
But 'tis, he says, to Reason plain and Sense,
And that he thinks a plausible Defence.
Were Truth by Sense and Reason to be Try'd;
Were all our Swearers might be laid aside.
No, of such Tools our Author has no need,
To make his Plot, or make his Play Succeed;
He, of Black Bills, has no Prodigious Tales,
Nor Spanish Pilgrims cast Ashore in Wales;
Here's not one Murther'd Magistrate at least:
Kept Rank like Ven'son for a City Feast:
Lay down four days stiff, the better to prepare
And fit his pliant Limbs to Ride in Chair:
Yet here's an Army Rais'd, though under Ground,
But no Man seen, nor one Commission found:
Here is a Traitor too, that's very Old,
Turbulent, Subtle, Mischievous, and Bold,
Bloody, Revengeful, and to Crown his Part,
Loves Fumbling with a Wenck, with all his heart;
Till after having many Changes past,
In spight of Age (thanks t' Heav'n) is Hang'd at last.
Next is a Senator that keeps a Whore;
In Venice none a higher Office bore;
In Lewdness every Night the Letcher ran,
Show me, all London, such another Man,
Catch him at Mother Creswolds, if you can.
Poland, Poland! had it been thy Lot,
I have heard in time of this Venetian Plot;
You surely chosen hadst one King from thence,
And Honour'd them as thou hast England since.

EPILOGUE.

TH E Text is done, and now for Application,
And when that's ended, pass your Approbation.

Though the Conspiracy's prevented here,
Methinks I see another hatching there;
And there's a certain Faction fain would Sway,
If they had Strength enough, and Damn this Play :

But this the Author had me boldly say ;
If any take this plainness in ill part,
He's glad on't from the bottom of his heart ;
Poets in honour of the Truth should write,
With the same Spirit Brave men for it Fight.

And though against him causeless hatreds rise,
And daily where he goes of late, he spies
The Scowles of Sullen and Revengeful Eyes ;
'Tis what he knows, with much contempt to bear,
And Serves a Cause too good to let him fear :

He fears no Poison from an Incens'd Drab,
No Ruffian's five-foot Sword, nor Rascal's Stab ;
Nor any other Snares of Mischiefe laid,
Not a Rose-Alley-Cudgel-Ambuscade,

From any private Cause where Malice Reigns,
Or general Pique all Blockheads have to Brains :
Nothing shall daunt his Pen when Truth does call ;

No, not the † Picture-mangler at Guild-Hall. † The Rascal that cut
The Rebel-Tribe, of which that Vermin's one, the Duke of York's
Have now set forward, and their Course begun ; Picture.

And while that Prince's Figure they Deface,
As they before had Massacred his Name,
Durst their base Fears but look him in the Face,
They'd use his Person as they've us'd his Fame :

A Face in which such Lineaments they read
Of that Great Martyr's, whose Rich Blood they Shed,
That their rebellious Hate they still retain,
And in his Son would Murther him again.

With Indignation then, let each brave Heart,
Rouse, and unite, to take his injur'd part ;
Till Royal Love and Goodness call him home,
And Songs of Triumph meet him as he come ;
Till Heaven his Honour, and our Peace Restore,
And Villains never wrong his Virtue more.

VENICE

I

VENICE PRESERV'D;
O R,
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A C T. I. Scene I.

Enter Priuli and Jaffeir.

Priu. **N**O more! I'll hear no more; be gone and leave me.
Jaff. Not hear me! by my suffering but you shall!
My Lord, my Lord! I'm not that abject wretch
You think me: Patience! where's the distance throws
Me back so far, but I may boldly speak
In right, though proud oppression will not hear me!

Priu. Have you not wrong'd me?

Jaff. Could my nature e'er
Have brook'd Injustice, or the doing Wrongs,
I need not now thus low have bent my self,
To gain a Hearing from a cruel Father!
Wrong'd you?

Priu. Yes! wrong'd me, in the nicest point;
The Honour of my House; you have done me wrong.
You may remember, (For I now will speak,
And urge its baseness:) When you first came home
From Travel, with such hopes, as made you lookt on
By all men's Eyes, a Youth of expectation;
Pleas'd with your growing Virtue, I receiv'd you;
Court'd, and sought to raise you to your Merits:
My House, my Table, nay my Fortune too,
My very self, was yours; you might have us'd me
To your best service; like an open friend,
I treated, trusted you, and thought you mine;
When in requital of my best Endeavours,
You treacherously practis'd to undo me,
Seduc'd the weakness of my Age's Darling,
My only Child, and stole her from my bosom:
Oh *Belvidera*!

Jaff. 'Tis to me you owe her,
Childless you had been else, and in the Grave,
Your name extinct, no more *Priuli* heard of.
You may remember, scarce five years are past,

B

Since

Since in your Brigantin you sail'd to see
 The *Adriatick* Wedded by our Duke,
 And I was with you: Your unskilful Pilot
 Dash'd us upon a Rock; when to your Boat
 You made for safety; entred first your self;
 The affrighted *Belvidera* following next,
 As she stood trembling on the Vessel's side,
 Was by a Wave wash'd off into the Deep;
 When instantly I plung'd into the Sea,
 And buffeting the Billows to her rescue,
 Redeem'd her Life with half the loss of mine.
 Like a rich Conquest in one hand I bore her,
 And with the other dash'd the sawcy Waves,
 That throng'd and press'd to rob me of my Prize:
 I brought her, gave her your despairing Arms:
 Indeed you thank'd me; but a nobler gratitude
 Rose in her Soul: for from that hour she lov'd me,
 Till for her Life she paid me with her self.

Prin. You stole her from me; like a Thief you stole her,
 At dead of night; that curled hour you chose
 To rife me of all my Heart held dear.
 May all your Joys in her prove false like mine;
 A sterile Fortune, and a barren Bed,
 Attend you both; Continual discord make
 Your Days and Nights bitter and grievous: Still
 May the hard hand of a vexatious Need
 Oppress, and grind you; till at last you find
 The Curse of Disobedience all your Portion.

Jess. Half of your Curse you have bestow'd in vain,
 Heav'n has already Crown'd our faithful Loves
 With a young Boy, sweet as his Mother's Beauty:
 May he live to prove more Gentle than his Grandfire,
 And happier than his Father!

Prin. Rather live
 To bait thee for his Bread, and din your ears
 With hungry Cries: Whilst his unhappy Mother
 Sits down and weeps in bitterness of want.

Jess. You talk as if 'twou'd please you.

Prin. 'Twould, by Heaven.

Once she was dear indeed; the Drops that fell
 From my sad heart, when she forgot her Duty,
 The fountain of my Life was not so precious:
 But she is gone, and if I am a Man
 I will forget her.

Jess. Would I were in my Grave.

Prin. And she too with thee;

A Plot Discover'd.

For, living here, you're but my curs'd Remembrancers
I once was happy.

Jaff. You use me thus, because you know my Soul
Is fond of *Belvidera*: You perceive
My Life feeds on her, therefore thus you treat me!
Oh! could my Soul ever have known Satiety:
Were I that Thief, the doer of such wrongs
As you upbraid me with, what hinders me,
But I might send her back to you with Contumely,
And court my Fortune where she would be kinder!

Prin. You dare not do't. ———

Jaff. Indeed, my Lord, I dare not.

My heart that awes me, is too much my Master:
Three years are past since first our Vows were plighted,
During which time the World must bear me witness,
I've treated *Belvidera* like your Daughter,
The Daughter of a Senator of *Venice*;
Distinction, Place, Attendance and Observance,
Due to her Birth, she always has commanded;
Out of my little Fortune I have done this;
Because (tho' hopeless e'er to win your Nature)
The World might see, I lov'd her for her self,
Not as the Heiress of the great *Prinli*. ——— *Prin.* No more!

Jaff. Yes! all, and then adieu for ever.

There's not a Wretch that lives on common Charity
But's happier than me: for I have known
The Luscious Sweets of Plenty; every night
Have slept with soft content about my head,
And never wak'd but to a joyful morning;
Yet now must fall like a full Ear of Corn,
Whose blossom scap'd, yet's wither'd in the ripening.

Prin. Home and be humble, study to retrench;
Discharge the lazy Vermin of thy Hall,
Those Pageants of thy Folly,
Reduce the glittering Trappings of thy Wife
To humble weeds, fit for thy little state;
Then to some Suburb Cottage both retire;
Rudge, to feed loathsome life; get Brats, and Starve ———
Come, home, I say. ——— [Exit *Prinli*.

Jaff. Yes, if my heart would let me ———
This proud, this swelling heart: Home I would go,
That my Doors are hateful to mine eyes,
And damm'd up with gaping Creditors,
Watchful as Fowlers when their Game will spring;
I have now not Fifty Ducats in the World,

Yet still I am in love, and pleas'd with Ruin.

Oh *Belvidera*! oh! she is my Wife —

And we will bear our wayward Fate together,

But ne'er know Comfort more.

Enter Pierre.

Pierre. My Friend good morrow!

How fares the honest Partner of my heart?

What, melancholy! not a word to spare me?

Jaff. I'm thinking, *Pierre*, how that damn'd starving Quality
Call'd Honesty, got footing in the World.

Pier. Why, pow'rful Villany first set it up,
For its own ease and safety: Honest men
Are the soft easie Cushions on which Knaves
Repose and fatten: Were all mankind Villains,
They'd starve each other; Lawyers wou'd want Practice,
Cut-throats Rewards: Each Man would kill his Brother
Himself, none would be paid or hang'd for Murder:
Honesty! 'twas a Cheat invented first
To bind the hands of bold deserving Rogues,
That Fools and Cowards might sit safe in Power,
And Lord it uncontroul'd above their Betters.

Jaff. Then Honesty is but a Notion.

Pier. Nothing else,

Like Wit, much talk'd of, not to be defin'd:
He that pretends to most too, has least share in't;
'Tis a ragged Virtue: Honesty! no more on't.

Jaff. Sure thou art Honest?

Pier. So indeed men think me.

But they'r mistaken, *Jaffeir*: I am a Rogue
As well as they;
A fine gay bold-fac'd Villain, as thou seest me;
'Tis true, I pay my debts when they're contracted;
I steal from no man; would not cut a Throat
To gain admission to a great man's Purse,
Or a Whore's Bed; I'd not betray my Friend,
To get his Place or Fortune: I scorn to Flatter
A blown-up Fool above me, or crush the Wretch beneath me:
Yet, *Jaffeir*, for all this I am a Villain.

Jaff. A Villain!

Pier. Yes, a most notorious Villain:

To see the sufferings of my fellow-creatures,
And own my self a man: To see our Senators
Cheat the deluded People with a shew
Of Liberty, which yet they n'er must taste of;
They say, by them our hands are free from Fetters,

Yet

Yet whom they please they lay in basest Bonds;
Bring whom they please to Infamy and Sorrow;
Drive us like Wrecks down the rough Tide of Power,
Whilst no hold's left to save us from Destruction;
All that bear this are Villains, and I one,
Not to rouse up at the great call of Nature,
And check the Growth of these Domestick Spoilers,
That make us Slaves, and tell us 'tis our Charter.

Jaff. Oh *Aquilina*! Friend, to lose such Beauty,
The dearest purchase of thy noble Labours;
She was thy right by Conquest, as by Love.

Pier. Oh *Jasseir*! I'd so fix'd my heart upon her,
That wheresoe'er I fram'd a Scheme of Life
For time to come, she was my only Joy,
With which I wish'd to sweeten future Cares;
I fancy'd pleasures, none but one that loves
And doats as I did, can imagine like 'em:
When in the Extremity of all these Hopes,
In the most Charming hour of Expectation,
Then when our eager wishes soar the highest,
Ready to stoop and grasp the lovely Game,
A Haggard Owl, a worthless Kite of Prey,
With his foul wings sayl'd in, and spoil'd my Quarry.

Jaff. I know the wretch, and scorn him as thou hat'st him.

Pier. Curse on the Common Good that's so Protected.

Where every Slave that heaps up Wealth enough
To do much wrong, becomes a Lord of Right:
I, who believ'd no ill could e'er come near me,
Found in the Embraces of my *Aquilina*
A wretched old, but itching Senator;
A wealthy Fool, that had bought out my Title:
A Rogue, that uses Beauty like a Lamb-skin,
Barely to keep him warm; That filthy Cuckoo too,
Was in my absence crept into my Nest,
And spoiling all my Brood of Noble Pleasure.

Jaff. Didst thou not chase him thence?

Pier. I did, and drove

The rank old bearded *Hirco* stinking home:
The matter was complain'd of in the Senate,
I summon'd to appear, and censur'd basely,
For violating something they call *Privilege* —
This was the Recompence of my Service:
Would I'd been rather beaten by a Coward:
A Soldier's Mistress, *Jasseir*, is his Religion,
When that's Profan'd, all other Tyes are broken:

That

That even dissolves all former bonds of service,
And from that hour I think my self as free
To be the Foe as e'er the Friend of *Venice*——
Nay, dear Revenge, whene'er thou call'st, I'm ready.

Jaff. I think no safety can be here for Virtue,
And grieve my Friend as much as thou, to live
In such a wretched State as this of *Venice*,
Where all agree to spoil the Publick Good,
And Villains fatten with the brave man's Labours.

Pier. We've neither Safety, Unity, nor Peace,
For the Foundation's lost of Common Good;
Justice is lame as well as blind amongst us;
The Laws (Corrupted to their ends that make 'em)
Serve but for Instruments of some new Tyranny,
That every day starts up t'enlave us deeper:
Now could this Glorious Cause but find out Friends
To do it right! oh *Joffair*! then might'st thou
Not wear these Seals of Woe upon thy Face:
The proud *Priuli* should be taught Humanity,
And learn to value such a Son as thou art.
I dare not speak! but my heart bleeds this moment;

Joff. Curst be the Cause, tho I thy friend be part on't:
Let me partake the troubles of thy bosom,
For I am us'd to misery, and perhaps
May find a way to sweeten't to thy spirit.

Pier. Too soon 'twill reach thy knowledge—*Jaff.* Then from thee
Let it proceed. There's Virtue in thy Friendship
Would make the saddest Tale of sorrow pleasing,
Strengthen my Constancy, and welcome Ruin.

Pier. Then thou art Ruin'd! *Jaff.* That I long since knew
I and ill Fortune have been long acquainted.

Pier. I past this very moment by thy doors,
And found them guarded by a Troop of Villains;
The Sons of publick Rapine were destroying:
They told me, by the Sentence of the Law
They had Commission to seize all thy Fortune:
Nay more, *Priuli's* cruel hand hath Sign'd it.
Here stood a Russian with a horrid Face
Lording it o'er a pile of massy Plate,
Tumbled into a heap for publick sale:
There was another making villanous jests
At thy undoing; he had ta'en possession
Of all thy ancient most domestick Ornaments,
Rich Hangings, intermix'd and wrought with Gold;
The very Bed, which on thy Wedding-night

Receiv'd thee to the Arms of *Belvidera*,
The Scene of all thy Joys, was violated
By the course hands of filthy Dungeon Villains,
And thrown amongst the common Lumber.

Jaff. Now thank Heav'n ——— *Pier.* Thank Heav'n! for what?

Jaff. That I'm not worth a Ducat.

Pier. Curse thy dull Stars, and the worse Fate of *Venice*,
Where Brothers, Friends, and Fathers, all are false;
Where there's no Trust, no Truth; where Innocence
Stoops under vile Oppression; and Vice Lords it:
Hadst thou but seen, as I did, how at last
Thy Beauteous *Belvidera*, like a wretch
That's doom'd to Banishment, came weeping forth,
Shining through Tears, like *April-Suns* in showers
That labour to o'ercome the Cloud that loads 'em,
Whilst two young Virgins, on whose Arms she lean'd,
Kindly look'd up, and at her Grief grew sad,
As if they catch'd the Sorrows that fell from her:
E'en the lewd Rabble that were gather'd round
To see the sight, stood mute when they beheld her;
Govern'd their roaring throats, and grumbled pity:
I cou'd have hugg'd the greazy Rogues: They pleas'd me.

Jaff. I thank thee for this Story, from my Soul,

Since now I know the worst that can befall me:

Ah *Pierre*! I have a heart, that could have born

The roughest wrong my Fortune could have done me:

But when I think what *Belvidera* feels,

The bitterness her tender Spirit tastes of,

I own my self a Coward: Bear my weakness,

If throwing thus my Arms about thy Neck,

I play the Boy, and blubber in thy bosom.

Oh! I shall drown thee with my sorrows! *Pier.* Burn!

First burn, and Level *Venice* to thy Ruin,

What starve like Beggars Brats in frosty weather,

Under a Hedge, and whine our selves to Death!

Thou, or thy Cause, shall't never want Assistance,

Whilst I have Blood or Fortune fit to serve thee;

Command my heart: Thou'rt every way its Master.

Jaff. No, there's a secret Pride in bravely Dying.

Pier. Rats die in holes and corners, Dogs run 'mad;

Man knows a braver Remedy for Sorrow:

Revenge! the Attribute of Gods, they stamp it

With their great Image on our Natures; die!

Consider well the Cause that calls upon thee:

And if thou'rt base enough, dye then: Remember

Thy

Thy *Belvidera* suffers: *Belvidera*!

Dye ——— Damn first ——— what be decently Interr'd
In a Church yard, and mingle thy brave Dust
With stinking Rogues that rot in dirty winding-sheets,
Surfeit-slain Fools, the common Dung o'th' Soil.

Jaff. Oh! *Pier.* Well said, out with't, Swear a little —

Jaff. Swear! By Sea and Air! by Earth, by Heaven and Hell,
I will revenge my *Belvidera*'s Tears!

Heark thee my Friend ——— *Priuli* ——— is ——— a Senator!

Pier. A Dog! *Jaff.* Agreed. *Pier.* Shoot him. *Jaff.* With all my heart.
No more: where shall we meet at Night? *Pier.* I'll tell thee;

On the *Rialto* every night at Twelve

I take my Evenings walk of Meditation,

There we two will meet, and talk of precious
Mischief. — *Jaff.* Farewel. *Pier.* At Twelve.

Jaff. At any hour, my plagues
Will keep me waking.

[*Ex. Pier.*

Tell me why, good Heav'n,

Thou made'st me what I am, with all the Spirit,

Aspiring thoughts, and Elegant desires

That fill the happiest Man? Ah! rather why

Didst thou not form me sordid as my Fate,

Base-minded, dull, and fit to carry Burdens?

Why have I Sense to know the Curse that's on me?

Is this just dealing, Nature? *Belvidera*!

[*Enter Belvidera.*

Poor *Belvidera*! *Belvid.* Lead me, lead me my Virgins!

To that kind Voice. My Lord, my Love, my Refuge!

Happy my Eyes, when they behold thy Face:

My heavy heart will leave its doleful bearing

At sight of thee, and bound with sprightly joys.

Oh smile, as when our Loves were in their Spring,

And cheer my fainting Soul. *Jaff.* As when our Loves

Were in their Spring? has then my Fortune chang'd?

Art thou not *Belvidera*, still the same,

Kind, good, and tender, as my Arms first found thee?

If thou art alter'd, where shall I have harbour?

Where ease my loaded heart? Oh! where complain?

Belv. Do's this appear like Change, or Love decaying;

When thus I throw my self into thy bosom,

With all the resolution of a strong truth?

Beats not my heart as 'twould alarm thine

To a new charge of bliss; I joy more in thee,

Than did thy Mother when she hugg'd thee first,

And bless'd the Gods for all her Travel past.

Jaff. Can there in Woman be such glorious Faith?
 Sure all ill stories of thy Sex are false;
 Oh Woman! lovely Woman! Nature made thee
 To temper Man: We had been Brutes without you:
 Angels are painted fair, to look like you;
 There's in you all that we believe of Heav'n,
 Amazing Brightness, Purity and Truth,
 Eternal Joy, and everlasting Love.

Belv. If Love be Treasure, we'll be wondrous Rich;
 I have so much, my heart will surely break with't;
 Vows can't express it. When I wou'd declare
 How great's my Joy, I'm dumb with the big Thought;
 I swell, and sigh, and labour with my longing.
 O lead me to some Desert wide and wild,
 Barren as our Misfortunes, where my Soul
 May have its vent; where I may tell aloud
 To the high Heavens, and every listning Planet,
 With what a boundless stock my bosom's fraught;
 Where I may throw my eager Arms about thee,
 Give loose to Love with Kisses, kindling Joy,
 And let off all the Fires that's in my heart.

Jaff. Oh *Belvidera*! doubly I'm a Beggar,
 Undone by Fortune, and in debt to thee;
 Want! worldly Want! that hungry meager Fiend
 Is at my heels, and chaces me in view.
 Canst thou bear Cold and Hunger? Can these Limbs,
 Fram'd for the tender Offices of Love,
 Endure the bitter gripes of smarting Poverty?
 When banish'd by our miseries abroad,
 (As suddenly we shall be) to seek out
 (In some far Climate where our Names are Strangers)
 For charitable succour; wilt thou then,
 When in a Bed of Straw we shrink together,
 And the bleak Winds shall whistle round our Heads;
 Wilt thou then talk thus to me? wilt thou then
 Hush my Cares thus, and shelter me with Love?

Belv. Oh I will love thee, even in Madness love thee.
 Tho my distracted Senses should forsake me,
 I'd find some intervals, when my poor heart
 Should 'swage it self and be let loose to thine.
 Tho the bare Earth be all our resting-place,
 Its Roots our Food, some Clift our Habitation,
 I'll make this Arm a Pillow for thy Head;
 As thou sighing ly'st, and swell'd with Sorrow,
 Creep to thy Bosom, pour the Balm of Love

Into thy Soul, and kiss thee to thy rest;
Then praise our God, and watch thee till the Morning.

Jaff. Hear this you Heav'ns, and wonder how you made her!
Reign, Reign ye Monarchs that divide the World,
Busie Rebellion ne'er will let you know
Tranquility and Happiness like mine;
Like gaudy Ships, th' obsequious Billows fall
And rise again, to lift you in your Pride;
They wait but for a Storm, and then devour you:
I, in my private Bark, already wreck'd,
Like a poor Merchant driv'n on unknown Land,
That had by chance pack'd up his choicest Treasure
In one dear Casket, and sav'd only that,
Since I must wander further on the shore,
Thus hug my little, but my precious store;
Resolv'd to scorn, and trust my Fate no more. [Exeunt]

ACT II.

Enter Pierre and Aquilina.

Aquil. **B**Y all thy Wrongs, thou'rt dearer to my Arms
Than all the Wealth of Venice: Pristhee stay,
And let us Love to night.

Pier. No: There's Fool,
There's Fool about thee: when a Woman sells
Her Flesh to Fools, her Beauty's lost to me;
They leave a Taint, a Sully where they've past;
There's such a baneful Quality about 'em,
E'en spoils Complexions with their Nauseousness,
They infect all they touch; I cannot think
Of tasting any thing a Fool has pall'd.

Aquil. I loath and scorn that Fool thou mean'st, as much
Or more than thou canst; but the Beast has Gold
That makes him necessary: Power too,
To qualify my Character, and poise me
Equal with peevish Virtue, that beholds
My Liberty with Envy: In their hearts
They're loose as I am; but an ugly Power
Sits in their Faces, and frights Pleasures from 'em.

Pier. Much good may't do you, Madam, with your Senator.

Aquil. My Senator! why, canst thou think that Wretch
E'er fill'd thy *Aquilina's* Arms with pleasure?
Think'st thou, because I sometimes give him leave
To foul himself at what he is unfit for;

Because

Because I force my self t' endure and suffer him,
Think'st thou I love him? No, by all the Joys
Thou ever gav'st me, his Presence is my Penance;
The worst thing an old man can be's a Lover,
A meer *Assurance* *Mori* to poor Woman,
I never lay by his decrepit side,
But all that Night I ponder'd on my Grave.

Pier. Would he were well sent thither.

Aquil. That's my wish too:

For then, my *Pierre*, I might have cause with pleasure
To play the Hypocrite: Oh! how I could weep
Over the dying Dotard, and kiss him too,
In hopes to smother him quite; then, when the time
Was come to pay my Sorrows at his Funeral,
For he has already made me Heir to Treasures
Wou'd make me out-act a real Widows whining:
How could I frame my Face to fit my mourning!
With wringing hands attend him to his Grave,
Fall swooning on his Hearse: Take mad possession,
E'en of the dismal Vault where he lay bury'd,
There like th' *Ephesian* Matron dwell, till thou,
My lovely Soldier, com'st to my Deliverance;
Then throwing up my Veil, with open Arms
And laughing Eyes, run to new dawning Joy.

Pier. No more! I've Friends to meet me here to night,
And must be private. As you prize my Friendship,
Keep up your Coxcomb: Let him not pry nor listen,
Nor fisk about the House as I have seen him,
Like a tame mumping Squirrel with a Bell on;
Curs will be abroad to bite him, if you do.

Aquil. What Friends to meet? mayn't I be of you Council?

Pier. How! A Woman ask Questions out of Bed?
Go to your Senator, ask him what passes
Amongst his Brethren, he'll hide nothing from you:
But pump not me for Politicks. No more!
Give order that whoever in my name
Comes here, receive admittance. So good night.

Aquil. Must we ne'er meet again! Embrace no more!
Is Love so soon and utterly forgotten?

Pier. As you henceforward treat your Fool, I'll think on't.

Aquil. Curst be all Fools, and doubly Curst my self,
The worst of Fools — I die if he forsakes me;
And now to keep him, Heav'n or Hell instruct me.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE The Rialto.

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaffeir. I'm here ; and thus, the Shades of Night around me,
I look as if all Hell were in my Heart,
And I in Hell. Nay, surely 'tis so with me ;——
For every step I tread, methinks some Fiend
Knocks at my Breast, and bids it not be quier.
I've heard how desperate wretches, like my self,
Have wander'd out at this dead time of Night
To meet the Foe of Mankind in his walk :
Sure I'm so Curst, that, tho' of Heav'n forsaken,
No Minister of Darkness cares to Tempt me.
Hell ! Hell ! why sleepest thou ?

Enter Pierre.

Pier. Sure I've stay'd too long :
The Clock has struck, and I may lose my Proselyte.
Speak, who goes there ?

Jaff. A Dog that comes to howl
At yonder Moon : What's he that asks the Question ?

Pier. A Friend to Dogs, for they are honest Creatures,
And ne'er betray their Masters ; never Fawn
On any that they love not : Well met Friend :

Jaffeir. *Jaff.* The same. Oh *Pierre*, Thou'rt come in season,
I was just going to Pray. *Pier.* Ah that's Mechanick,

Priests make a Trade on't, and yet starve by't too :
No Praying ; it spoils Business, and time's Precious ;
Where's *Belvidera* ? *Jaff.* For a Day or two

I've lodg'd her privately, till I see farther
What Fortune will do with me ? Prithee Friend,
If thou would'st have me fit to hear good Council,
Speak not of *Belvidera*——

Pier. Speak not of her ? *Jaff.* Oh no !

Pier. Nor name her ? May be I wish her well.

Jaff. Whom well ? *Pier.* Thy Wife, thy lovely *Belvidera* ;
I hope a man may wish his Friend's Wife well,
And no harm done !

Jaff. Ye are merry *Pierre* ! *Pierre.* I am so :
Thou shalt smile too, and *Belvidera* smile ;
We'll all rejoyce, here's something to buy Pins, [*gives him a Purse*]
Marriage is Chargeable. *Jaff.* I but half wisht

To see the Devil, and he's here already. Well !
What must this buy, Rebellion, Murder, Treason ?
Tell me which way I must be damn'd for this.

Pier. When last we parted, we'd no qualms like these,
But entertain'd each others Thoughts like Men,

Whol

Whose Souls were well acquainted. Is the World
Reform'd since our last meeting? What new Miracles
Have happen'd? Has *Priuli's* heart relented?
Can he be honest? *Jaff.* Kind Heav'n! let heavy Curses
Gall his old Age; Cramps, Aches rack his Bones,
And bitterest disquiet wring his Heart;
Oh let him live till Life become his burden!
Let him groan under't long, linger an Age
In the worst Agonies and Pangs of Death,
And find its ease, but late. *Pier.* Nay, could'st thou not
As well, my Friend, have stretch'd the Curse to all
The Senate round, as to one single Villain?

Jaff. But Curses stick not: Could I kill with Cursing,
By Heav'n I know not thirty Heads in *Venice*
Should not be blasted; Senators should rot
Like Dogs on Dunghils; but their Wives and Daughters
Die of their own Diseases. Oh for a Curse
To kill with! *Pier.* Daggers, Daggers, are much better!

Jaff. Ha! *Pier.* Daggers.

Jaff. But where are they? *Pier.* Oh, a Thousand
May be dispos'd in honest hands in *Venice*.

Jaff. Thou talk'st in Clouds.

Pier. But yet a heart half wrong'd
As thine has been, would find the meaning, *Jaff.*

Jaff. A thousand Daggers, all in honest hands;
And have not I a Friend will stick one here?

Pier. Yes, if I thought thou were't not to be cherish'd
T' a nobler purpose, I would be that Friend.
But thou hast better Friends, Friends; whom thy Wrongs
Have made thy Friends; Friends worthy to be called so.
I'll trust thee with a secret: There are Spirits
This hour at work. But as thou art a Man,
Whom I have pickt and chosen from the World,
Swear that thou wilt be true to what I utter,
And when I've told thee that which only Gods,
And Men like Gods are privy to, then swear
No Chance or Change shall wrest it from thy Bosom.

Jaff. When thou would'st bind me, is there need of Oaths?
(Green-sickness Girls lose Maidenheads with such Counters)
For thou'rt so near my heart, that thou may'st see
Its bottom, sound its strength, and firmness to thee:
Is Coward, Fool, or Villain in my Face?
If I seem none of these, I dare believe
Thou would'st not use me in a little Cause,
For I am fit for Honour's toughest task;

Nor

Nor ever yet found fooling was my Province;
And for a villanous inglorious Enterprize,
I know thy heart so well, I dare lay mine
Before thee, let it to what point thou wilt.

Pier. Nay, It's a Cause thou wilt be fond of, *Jaffier.*
For it is founded on the noblest Basis,
Our Liberties, our natural Inheritance;
There's no Religion, no Hypocrisy in't;
We'll do the Business, and ne'er fast and pray for't:
Openly act a Deed the World shall gaze
With wonder at, and envy when 'tis done.

Jaff. For Liberty! *Pier.* For Liberty, my Friend!
Thou shalt be freed from base *Privuli's* Tyranny,
And thy sequestred Fortunes heal'd again.
I shall be freed from those opprobrious Wrongs
That press me now, and bend my Spirit downward.
All *Venice* free, and every growing Merit
Succeed to its just Right: Fools shall be pull'd
From Wisdom's Seat; those baleful unclean Birds,
Those lazy Owls, who pearch'd near Fortune's Top)
Sit only watchful with their heavy wings
To cuff down new-fledg'd Virtues, that would rise
To nobler heights, and make the Grove harmonious.

Jaff. What can I do? *Pier.* Can't thou not kill a Senator?

Jaff. Were there one wise or honest, I could kill him
For herding with that Nest of Fools and Knaves.
By all my wrongs, thou talk'st as if Revenge
Were to be had, and the brave Story warms me.

Pier. Swear then! *Jaff.* I do, by all those glittering Stars
And yon great ruling Planet of the Night!
By all good Powers above, and ill below!
By Love and Friendship, dearer than my Life!
No Pow'r, or Death shall make me false to thee.

Pier. Here we embrace, and I'll unlock my Heart.
A Council's held hard by, where the Destruction
Of this great Empire's hatching: There I'll lead thee!
But be a Man, for thou'rt to mix with Men
Fit to disturb the Peace of all the World,
And Rule it when it's wildest — *Jaff.* I give thee thanks
For this kind warning: Yes, I will be a Man,
And charge thee, *Pierre*, whene'er thou seest my fears
Betray me less, to rip this heart of mine
Out of my Breast, and shew it for a Coward's.
Come let's be gone, for from this hour I chase
All little Thoughts, all tender human Follies

out of my bosom: Vengeance shall have room!

Revenge! Pier. And Liberty!

Jaff. Revenge! Revenge—

[Exeunt.]

The Scene changes to Aquilina's House, the Greek Courtesan.

Enter Renault.

Renault. Why was my Choice Ambition, the worst ground
Wretch can Build on? it's indeed at distance

A good Prospect, tempting to the View,

The Height delights us, and the Mountain-Top

looks beautiful, because it's nigh to Heav'n;

but we ne'er think how Sandy's the Foundation,

What Storm will batter, and what Tempest shake us!

Who's there?

Enter Spinosa.

Spin. Renault, good morrow! for by this time

I think the Scale of Night has turn'd the Balance,

and weighs up Morning: Has the Clock struck Twelve?

Rena. Yes, Clocks will go as they are set: But Man,

irregular Man's ne'er constant, never certain:

I've spent at least three precious hours of darkness

in waiting dull attendance; 'tis the Curse

Of diligent Virtue to be mixt like mine,

With giddy Tempers, Souls but half resolv'd.

Spin. Hell seize that Soul amongst us, it can frighten.

Rena. What's then the cause that I am here alone?

Why are we not together?

Enter Eliot.

O Sir, welcome!

You are an *Englishman*: When Treason's hatching

One might have thought you'd not have been behind-hand.

In what Whore's Lap have you been lolling?

Give but an *English-man* his Whore and Ease,

Beef and a Sea-coat fire, he's yours for ever.

Eliot. French-man, you are Sawcy.

Rena. How!

Enter Bedamar the Ambassador, Theodore, Branveil, Durand,

Brabe, Revillido, Mezzana, Ternon, Retrofi, Conspirators.

Bedam. At difference, fye.

Is this a time for Quarrels? Thieves and Rogues

Fall out and brawl: Should Men of your high calling,

Men separated by the choice of Providence,

From the gross heap of Mankind, and set here

In this Assembly as in one great Jewel,

To adorn the bravest purpose it e'er smil'd on;

Should you like Boys wrangle for Trifles?

Ren. Boys?

Beda. Renault, thy Hand! Ren. I thought I'd given my Heart

long since to every Man that mingles here;

But

But grieve to find it trusted with such Tempers,
That can't forgive my froward Age its weakness.

Beda. *Eliot*, Thou once had'st Virtue; I have seen
Thy stubborn Temper bend with godlike Goodness,
Not half thus courted: 'Tis thy Nation's Glory,
To hug the Foe that offers brave Alliance.

Once more embrace, my Friends——we'll all embrace——
United thus, we are the mighty Engine
Must twist this rooted Empire from its Basis!

Totters it not already? *Eliot.* Would 'twere tumbling.

Beda. Nay it shall down: This Night we Seal its Ruin.

Enter Pierre.

Oh *Pierre* thou art welcome!

Come to my Breast, for by its hopes thou look'st
Lovelily dreadful, and the Fate of *Venice*
Seems on thy Sword already. Oh my *Mars*!

The Poets that first feign'd a God of War
Sure Prophecy'd of thee. *Pier.* Friends! was not *Brutus*,

(I mean that *Brutus*, who in open Senate
Stabb'd the first *Cæsar* that Usurp'd the World)

A Gallant Man? *Rena.* Yes, and *Cataline* too;

Tho Story wrong his Fame: For he conspir'd
To prop the reeling Glory of his Country:

His Cause was good. *Beda.* And ours as much above it,
As *Renauls* thou'rt superior to *Cetbegus*,

Or *Pierre* to *Cassius*. *Pierre.* Then to what we aim at,
When do we start? or must we talk for ever?

Beda. No *Pierre*, the Deed's near Birth: Fate seems to have set
The Business up, and given it to our Care,
I hope there's not a heart nor hand amongst us
But is firm and ready. *All.* All!

We'll die with *Bedamer*. *Beda.* Oh Men,
Matchless, as will your Glory be hereafter,
The Game is for a matchless Prize, if won;

If lost, disgraceful Ruin. *Rena.* What can lose it?

The Publick Stock's a Beggar; one *Venetian*
Trusts not another: Look into their Stores

Of general safety; empty Magazines,
A tatter'd Fleet, a murmuring unpaid Army,
Bankrupt Nobility, a harass'd Commonalty,

A Faction, giddy, and divided Senate,
Is all the strength of *Venice*: Let's destroy it;

Let's fill their Magazines with Arms to awe them,
Man out their Fleet, and make their Trade maintain it;
Let loose the murmuring Army on their Masters,

To pay themselves with Plunder; Lop their Nobles
To the base Roots, whence most of 'em first sprung;
Enslave the Rout, whom smarting will make humble;
Turn out their droning Senate, and possess
That Seat of Empire which our Souls were fram'd for.

Pier. Ten thousand Men are Armed, at your Nod,
Commanded all by Leaders fit to guide
A Battel for the Freedom of the World;
This wretched State has starv'd them in its Service.
And by your Bounty quicken'd, they're resolv'd
To serve your Glory, and revenge their own:
Th' have all their different Quarters in this City,
Watch for th' Alarm, and grumble 'tis so tardy.

Beda. I doubt not, Friend, but thy unweary'd diligence
Has still kept waking, and it shall have ease;
After this Night it is resolv'd we meet
No more, till *Venice* own us for her Lords.

Pier. How lovely the *Adriatique* Whore,
Dress'd in her Flames, will shine! devouring Flames!
Such as shall burn her to the watery bottom,
And hiss in her Foundation.

Beda. Now if any
Amongst us that owns this Glorious Cause,
Have Friends or Interest he'd wish to save,
Let it be told; the general Doom is Seal'd;
But I'd forgo the hopes of a World's Empire,
Rather than wound the Bowels of my Friend.

Pier. I must confess, you there have touch'd my weakness,
I have a Friend; hear it, such a Friend!
My heart was ne'er shut to him. Nay, I'll tell you,
He knows the very business of this hour;
But he rejoices in the Cause, and loves it:
We've chang'd a Vow to live and die together,
And he's at hand to ratify it here.

Ren. How! all Betray'd? *Pier.* No—I've dealt nobly with you;
I've brought my All into the Publick Stock;
I'd but one Friend, and him I'll share amongst you!
Receive and Cherish him! Or if, when seen
And searcht, you find him worthless; as my Tongue
Has lodg'd this Secret in his Faithful Breast,
To ease your Fears I wear a Dagger here,
I'll rip it out again, and give you rest.
Come forth thou only Good I e'er could boast of.

Enter Jasseir with a Dagger.

Beda. His Presence bears the shew of Manly Virtue!

Jass. I know you'll wonder all, that thus uncal'd,
I dare approach this place of fatal Councils;

But I'm amongst you, and by Heav'n it glads me,
 To see so many Virtues thus united,
 To restore Justice and dethrone Oppression.
 Command this Sword, if you would have it quiet,
 Into this Breast; but if you think it worthy
 To cut the Throats of Reverend Rogues in Robes,
 Send me into the Curs'd Assembl'd Senate;
 It shrinks not, tho I meet a Father there.
 Would you behold this City flaming? Here's
 A Hand shall bear a lighted Torch at Noon
 To th' Arsenal, and set its Gates on Fire.

Ren. You talk this well, Sir.

Jaff. Nay ——— by Heav'n I'll do this.
 Come, come, I read distrust in all your faces,
 You fear me a Villain; and indeed it's odd
 To hear a Stranger talk thus at first meeting,
 Of Matters that have been so well debated;
 But I come ripe with Wrongs, as you with Councils;
 I hate this Senate, am a Foe to *Venice*:
 A Friend to none, but Men resolv'd like me,
 To push on Mischief. Oh did you but know me,
 I need not talk thus! *Beda. Pierre!* I must embrace him,
 My heart beats to this Man as if it knew him.

Rena. I never lov'd these Huggers. *Jaff.* Still I see
 The Cause delights me not. Your Friends survey me,
 As I were dangerous ——— but I come Arm'd
 Against all doubts, and to your Trust will give
 A Pledge, worth more than all the World can pay for.
 My *Belvedira!* Ho! My *Belvedira!*

Bed. What wonder next? *Jaff.* Let me intreat you,
 As I have henceforth hopes to call ye Friends,
 That all but the Ambassador, this
 Grave Guide of Councils, with my Friend that owns me,
 Withdraw a while to spare a Woman's Blushes.

[*Exit all but Bed. Rena. Jaff. Pier.*

Beda. Pierre, Whither will this Ceremony lead us?

Jaff. My *Belvidera!* *Belvidera!*

Belv. Who?

[*Enter Belvidera.*

Who calls so loud at this late peaceful hour?
 That Voice was wont to come in gentle whispers,
 And fill my Ears with the soft Breath of Love:
 Thou hourly Image of my Thoughts, where art thou?

Jaff. Indeed 'tis late. *Belv.* Oh; I have slept and dreamt,
 And dreamt again: Where hast thou been thou Loyerer?
 Tho my Eyes clos'd, my Arms have still been open'd;
 Stretch'd every way betwixt my broken Slumbers,
 To search if thou wert come to crown my Rest;

There's

There's no repose without thee: Oh the day,
Too soon will break, and wake us to our Sorrow;
Come, come to Bed, and bid thy Cares good Night.

Jaff. Oh *Belvidera*! we must change the Scene
In which the past Delights of Life were tasted:
The Poor sleep little; we must learn to watch
Our Labours late, and early every morning.
Midst Winter Frosts, then clad and fed with Spring,
Rise to our toils, and drudge away the day.

Belv. Alas! where am I! whither is't you lead me!
Methinks I read distraction in your face!
Something less gentle than the Fate you tell me:
You shake and tremble too! your Blood runs cold!
Heavens guard my Love, and bless his heart with Patience.

Jaff. That I have Patience, let our Fate bear witness,
Who has ordain'd it so, that thou and I,
(Thou the divinest Good, Man e'er possess'd,
And I, the wretched'st of the Race of Man)
This very hour, without one Tear, must part.

Belv. Part! must we part? Oh! am I then forsaken?
Will my Love cast me off? have my Misfortunes
Offended him so highly, that he'll leave me?
Why drag you from me? whither are you going?
My Dear! my Life! my Love!

Jaff. Oh Friends!
Belv. Speak to me. *Jaff.* Take her from my heart,
She'll gain such hold else, I shall ne'er get loose.
I charge thee take her, but with tender'st care,
Relieve her Troubles and assuage her Sorrows.

Ren. Rise, Madam! and Command amongst your Servants!

Jaff. To you, Sirs, and your Honours, I bequeath her,
And with her this; when I prove unworthy — [Gives a Dagger.
You know the rest. — Then strike it to her heart;
And tell her, he who three whole happy years
Lay in her Arms, and each kind Night repeated
The passionate Vows of still increasing Love,
Sent that Reward for all her Truth and Sufferings.

Belv. Nay, take my Life, since he has sold it cheaply;
Or send me to some distant Clime your Slave;
But let it be far off, lest my complainings
Should reach his guilty Ears, and shake his Peace.

Jaff. No, *Belvidera*, I've contriv'd thy Honour:
Trust to my Faith, and be but Fortune kind
To me, as I'll preserve that Faith unbroken,
When next we meet, I'll lift thee to a Height,
Shall gather all the gazing World about thee,

To wonder what strange Virtue plac'd thee there.
But if we ne'er meet more ———

Belv. Oh thou unkind one ;
Ne'er meet more ! have I deserv'd this from you ?
Look on me, tell me, tell me ; speak thou dear Deceiver,
Why am I separated from thy Love ?
If I am false, accuse me ; but if true,
Don't, prithee don't in Poverty forsake me.
But pity the sad heart, that's torn with parting.
Yet hear me ! yet recall me ———

[*Ex. Ren. Bed. and Belv.*]

Jaff. Oh my Eyes !
Look not that way, but turn your selves a while
Ino my heart, and be wean'd all together.
My Friend, where art thou ?

Pier. Here, my Honour's Brother

Jaff. Is *Belvidera* gone ;
Back to her own Apartment : but, by Heav'n !
Thou must not see her more till our Work's over.

Pier. Renault has led her

Jaff. No ?

Pier. Not for your Life

Jaff. Oh *Pierre*, wer't thou but she,
How I could pull thee down into my heart,
Gaze on thee till my Eye-strings crackt with Love ;
Till all my Sinews with its fire extended,
Fixt me upon the Rack of ardent Longing ;
Then swelling, sighing, raging to be blest,
Come like a panting Turtle to thy Breast,
On thy soft Bosom, hovering, bill and play,
Confess the Cause why last I fled away ;
Own 'twas a fault, but swear to give it o'er,
And never follow false Ambition more.

[*Ex. Ambo.*]

A C T. III.

Enter Aquilina and her Maid.

Aquil. TELL him I am gone to Bed : Tell him I am not at home ;
tell him I've better Company with me, or any thing ;
tell him in short I will not see him, the eternal troublesome vexatious
Fool : He's worse Company than an Ignorant Physician — I'll not
be disturb'd at these unseasonable hours.

Maid. But Madam ! He's here already, just enter'd the doors.

Aquil. Turn him out agen, you unnecessary, useles, giddy-brain'd
Ass ! if he will not be gone, set the House a-fire and burn us both : I'd
rather meet a Toad in my dish, than that old hideous Animal in my
Chamber to Night.

Enter

Enter Antonio.

Anto. *Nacky, Nacky, Nacky*,—how do'st do *Nacky*? Hurry durry. I am come little *Nacky*; past eleven a Clock; a late hour; time in all Conscience to go to bed, *Nacky*—*Nacky* did I say? Ay, *Nacky*, *Aquilina, lina, lina, quilina, quilina, quilina, Aquilina, Naquilina, Namina, Acky, Acky, Nacky, Nacky*, Queen, *Nacky*—come let's to bed—you Fubbs, you Pugg you—you little Pufs—Purree Tuzzy—I am a Senator.

Aquil. You are Fool, I am sure.

Anto. May be so too, Sweet-heart. Never the worse Senator for all that. Come *Nacky, Nacky*, let's have a Game at Rump, *Nacky*.

Aquil. You would do well Signior to be troublesome here no longer, but leave me to my self, be sober and go home, Sir.

Anto. Home, *Madona*!

Aquil. Ay, home, Sir. Who am I?

Anto. *Madona*, as I take it you are my.—you are —. thou art my little *Nicky Nacky*—that's all!

Aquil. I find you are resolv'd to be troublesome; and so to make short of the matter in few words, I hate you, detest you, loath you, I am weary of you, sick of you—hang you, you are an Old, Silly, Impertinent, Impotent, Sollicitous Coxcomb; Crazy in your Head, and Lazy in your Body, love to be meddling with every thing, and if you had not Money, you are good for nothing.

Anto. Good for nothing! Hurry durry, I'll try that presently. Sixty one years Old, and good for nothing; that's brave. [*To the Maid.*] Come come come, Mrs. fiddle-faddle, turn you out for a season; go, turn out I say, it is our will and pleasure to be private some moments — out, out when you are bid too — [*Puts her out, and locks the door.*] Good for nothing, you say.

Aquil. Why what are you good for?

Anto. In the first place, Madam, I am Old, and consequently very wise, very wise, *Madona*, d'ye mark that? in the second place take notice, if you please, that I am a Senator, and when I think fit can make Speeches *Madona*. Hurry durry, I can make a Speech in the Senate-house now and then—would make your hair stand an end, *Madona*.

Aquil. What care I for your Speeches in the Senate-house? if you would be silent here, I should thank you.

Anto. Why, I can make Speeches to thee too, my lovely *Madona*; for Example—My cruel Fair one,

[*Takes out a Purse of Gold, and at every pause shakes it.*]

Since it is my Fate, that you should with your Servant angry prove; tho late at Night—I hope 'tis not too late with this to gain reception for my Love—There's for thee my little *Nicky Nacky*—take it, here take it—I say take it, or I'll throw it at your head—how now Rebel!

Aquil.

Aquil. Truly, my Illustrious Senator, I must confess your Honour is at present most profoundly Eloquent indeed.

Anto. Very well: Come, now let's sit down and think upon't a little——come, sit I say——sit down by me a little, my *Nicky Nacky*, ha—— [*Sits down*] Hurry durry——good for nothing——

Aquil. No Sir, if you please I can know my distance and stand.

Anto. Stand: How, *Nacky* up and I down! Nay then let me exclaim with the Poet,

*Shew me a Case more pitiful who can,
A standing Woman, and a falling Man.*

Hurry durry——not sit down——see this ye Gods.

You won't sit down? *Aquil.* No, Sir.

Anto. Then look you now, suppose me a Bull, a *Basan-Bull*, the Bull of Bulls, or any Bull. Thus up I get and with my brows thus bent—I broo, I say I broo, I broo, I broo. You won't sit down will you—I broo——

(*Bellows like a Bull, and drives her about.*)

Aquil. Well, Sir, I must endure this. Now your [*She sits down.*] Honour has been a Bull, pray what Beast will your Worship please to be next?

Anto. Now I'll be a Senator agen, and thy Lover, little *Nicky Nacky*! [*He sits by her.*] Ah toad, toad, toad, toad! spit in my Face a little, *Nacky*——spit in my Face prithee, spit in my face, never so little: spit but a little bit——spit, spit, spit, spit when you are bid I say; do, prithee spit——now, now, now spit: what you won't spit will you? Then I'll be a Dog.

Aquil. A Dog, my Lord!

Anto. Ay a Dog——and I'll give thee this t'other Purse to let me be a Dog——and use me like a Dog a little. Hurry durry—I will——here 'tis.——

[*Gives the Purse.*]

Aquil. Well, with all my heart. But let me beseech your Dogship to play your tricks over as fast as you can, that you may come to stinking the sooner, and be turn'd out of doors as you deserve.

Anto. Ay, ay——no matter for that—— [*He gets under the Table.*] that shan't move me—Now, bough waugh waugh, bough waugh——

[*Barks like a Dog.*]

Aquil. Hold, hold, hold Sir, I beseech you: what is't you do? If Curs bite, they must be kickt, Sir. Do you see, kickt thus.

Anto. Ay with all my heart: do, kick, kick on, now I am under the Table, kick agen——kick harder——harder yet, bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough——'odd, I'll have a snap at thy shins——bough waugh waugh, waugh, bough——'odd she kicks bravely.——

Aquil. Nay, then I'll go another way to work with you: and I think here's an Instrument fit for the purpose! [*Fetches a Whip and a Bell.*] What bite your Mistress, firrah! out, out of doors you Dog, to Kennel and be hang'd——bite your Mistress by the Legs, you Rogue——

[*She whips him.*]

Anto.

Anto. Nay, prithee *Nacky*, now thou art too loving: Hurry durr, 'odd I'll be a Dog no longer.

Aquil. Nay, none of your fawning and grinning: But be gone, or here's the Discipline: What bite your Mistress by the Legs you mungil? out of doors—hout hout, to kennel firrah! go.

Anto. This is very barbarous usage, *Nacky*, very barbarous: look you, I will not go—I will not stir from the door, that I resolve—hurry durr, what shut me out? *[She whips him out.]*

Aquil. Ay, and if you come here any more to night I'll have my Footmen lug you, you Cur: What bite your poor Mistress *Nacky*, *[Enter Maid.]*
[firrah!]

Maid. Heav'ns Madam! What's the matter? *[He howls at the door]*

Aquil. Call my Footmen hither presently. *like a Dog.*

Enter two Footmen.

Maid. They're here already Madam, the House is all alarm'd with a strange noise, that no body knows what to make of.

Aquil. Go all of you and turn that troublesome Beast in the next Room out of my House—If I ever see him within these walls again, without my leave for his admittance, you sneaking Rogues—I'll have you poyson'd all, poyson'd like Rats: every corner of the House shall stink of one of you: Go, and learn hereafter to know my pleasure. So now for my *Pierre*:

Thus when the Godlike Lover was displeas'd;

We Sacrifice our Fool, and he's pleas'd.

[Exeunt.]

S C E N E The Second.

Enter Belvidera.

Belvid. I'M Sacrific'd! I'm Sold! Betray'd to Shame!

Inevitable Ruin has inclos'd me!

No sooner was I to my Bed repair'd,

To weigh and (weeping) ponder my condition,

But the old hoary Wretch, to whose false Care

My Peace and Honour was entrusted, came

(Like *Tarquin*) ghastly with Infernal Lust.

Oh thou *Roman Lucrece*! thou could'st find Friends to vindicate thy

I never had but one, and he's prov'd false;

[Wrong,

He that should guard my Virtue, has betray'd it;

Left me! undone me! Oh that I could hate him!

Where shall I go! Oh whither, whither wander?

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaff. Can *Belvidera* want a resting place

When these poor Arms are open to receive her?

Oh 'tis in vain to struggle with Desires

Strong as my Love to thee; for every moment

I'm

I'm from thy sight, the Heart within my Bosom
Moans like a tender Infant in its Cradle,
Whose Nurse had left it: Come, and with the Songs
Of gentle Love perswade it to its peace.

Belv. I fear the stubborn Wanderer will not own me,
'Tis grown a Rebel to be rul'd no longer,
Scorns the Indulgent Bosom that first lull'd it;
And like a Disobedient Child, disdains
The soft Authority of *Belvidera*.

Jaff. There was a time — *Belv.* Yes, yes there was a time
When *Belvidera's* Tears, her Cries, and Sorrows,
Were not despis'd; when if she chanc'd to sigh,
Or look but sad; — there was indeed a time
When *Jaffier* would have ta'en her in his Arms,
Eas'd her declining Head upon his Breast,
And never left her till he found the Cause.
But let her now weep Seas,
Cry till she rend the Earth; sigh till she burst
Her heart asunder; still he bears it all;
Deaf as the Wind, and as the Rocks unshaken.

Jaff. Have I been deaf? am I that Rock unmov'd?
Against whose root, Tears beat, and Sighs are sent!
In vain have I beheld thy Sorrows calmly!
Witness against me Heav'ns, have I done this?
Then bear me in a Whirlwind back again,
And let that angry Dear one ne'er forgive me!
Oh thou too rashly censurest of my Love!
Could'st thou but think how I have spent this night,
Dark and alone, no Pillow to my Head,
Rest in my Eyes, nor Quiet in my Heart,
Thou would'st not *Belvidera*, sure thou would'st not
Talk to me thus, but like a pitying Angel
Spreading thy Wings, come settle on my Breast,
And hatch warm Comfort there, e'er Sorrows freeze it.

Belv. Why, then poor Mourner, in what baleful corner
Hast thou been talking with that Witch the Night?
On what cold Stone hast thou been stretch'd along,
Gathering the grumbling Winds about thy Head,
To mix with theirs the Accents of thy Woes!
Oh now I find the Cause my Love forsakes me!
I am no longer fit to bear a share
In his Concernments: My weak Female Virtue
Must not be trusted; 'Tis too frail and tender.

Jaff. Oh *Porcia*! *Porcia*! What a Soul was thine?

Belv. That *Porcia* was a Woman; and when *Brutus*

Big with the Fate of *Rome*, (Heav'n guard thy safety!)
Conceal'd from her the Labours of his Mind,

She let him see her Blood was great as his,
Flow'd from a Spring as Noble, and a Heart
Fit to partake his Troubles, as his Love:

Fetch, fetch that Dagger back, the dreadful Dower
Thou gav'st last night in parting with me; strike it
Here to my Heart; and as the Blood flows from it,
Judge if it run not pure as *Cato's* Daughter's.

Jaff. Thou art too good, and I indeed unworthy,
Unworthy so much Virtue: Teach me how
I may deserve such matchless Love as thine,
And see with what attention I'll obey thee.

Belv. Do not despise me: That's the All I ask.

Jaff. Despise thee! Hear me——

Belv. Oh thy Charming Tongue

Is but too well acquainted with my weakness;
Knows, let it name but Love, my melting heart
Dissolves within my Breast; till with clos'd Eyes
I reel into thy Arms, and all's forgotten.

Jaff. What shall I do?

Belv. Tell me! be just, and tell me
Why dwells that busy Cloud upon thy face?
Why am I made a stranger? why that sigh,
And I not know the Cause? Why when the World
Is wrapt in Rest, why chuses then my Love
To wander up and down in horrid darkness,
Loathing his Bed, and these desiring Arms?
Why are these Eyes Bloodshot with tedious watching?
Why starts he now? and looks as if he wish'd
His Fate were finish'd? Tell me, ease my fear;
Lest when we next time meet, I want the power
To search into the sickness of thy Mind,
But talk as wildly then as thou look'st now.

Jaff. Oh *Belvidera*!

Belv. Why was I last night deliver'd to a Villain?

Jaff. Hah, a Villain!

Belv. Yes! to a Villain! Why at such an hour
Meets that Assembly all made up of Wretches
That look as Hell had drawn 'em into League?
Why, I in this hand, and in that a Dagger,
Was I deliver'd with such dreadful Ceremonies?

"To you, Sirs, and to your Honour I bequeath her,

"And with her this: When'er I prove unworthy,

"You know the rest, then strike it to her heart?

E

Oh!

Oh why's that *rest* conceal'd from me? must I
Be made the Hostage of a Hellish Trust?
For such I know I am; that's all my value!
But by the Love and Loyalty I owe thee,
I'll free thee from the Bondage of these Slaves;
Strait to the Senate, tell 'em all I know,
All that I think, all that my Fears inform me!

Jaff. Is this the *Roman* Virtue: this the Blood
That boasts its purity with *Cato's* Daughter?

Would she have e'er betray'd her *Brutus*? *Belv.* No;

For *Brutus* trusted her: Wert thou so kind,

What would not *Belvidera* suffer for thee?

Jaff. I shall undo my self, and tell thee all.

Belv. Look not upon me as I am a Woman,

But as a Bone, thy Wife, thy Friend; who long

Has had admission to thy Heart, and there

Study'd the Virtues of thy gallant Nature;

Thy Constancy, thy Courage, and thy Truth,

Have been my daily Lesson: I have learnt 'em,

Am bold as thou, can suffer or despise

The worst of Fates for thee; and with thee share 'em.

Jaff. Oh you Divinest Powers! look down and hear

My Prayers! instruct me to reward this Virtue!

Yet think a little, e'er thou tempt me further;

Think I've a Tale to tell will shake thy Nature,

Melt all this boasted Constancy thou talk'st of

Into vile Tears and despicable Sorrows:

Then if thou should'st betray me!

Belv. Shall I Swear?

Jaff. No, Do not Swear: I would not violate

Thy tender Nature with so rude a Bond:

But as thou hop'st to see me live my days,

And love thee long, lock this within thy Breast;

I've bound my self by all the strictest Sacraments,

Divine and Human ———

Belv. Speak!

Jaff. To kill thy Father ——— *Belv.* My Father!

Jaff. Nay the Throats of the whole Senate

Shall bleed, my *Belvidera*: He amongst us

That spares his Father, Brother, or his Friend,

Is Damn'd. How Rich and Beauteous will the Face

Of Ruin look, when these wide Streets run Blood;

I, and the Glorious Partners of my Fortune

Shouting, and Striding o'er the prostrate Dead;

Still to new waste; whilst thou, far off in safety

Smiling, shalt see the Wonders of our daring;

And when Night comes, with Praise and Love receive me.

Belv.

Belv. Oh! *Jaff.* Have a care, and shrink not even in thought!
For if thou do'st ——— *Belv.* I know it, thou wilt kill me.

Do, strike thy Sword into this Bosom: Lay me
Dead on the Earth, and then thou wilt be safe.
Murder my Father! Tho' his Cruel Nature
Has Persecuted me to my Undoing;
Driven me to basest Wants; Can I behold him
With smiles of Vengeance, Butcher'd in his Age?
The Sacred Fountain of my Life destroy'd?

And canst thou shed the Blood that gave me Being?

Nay, be a Traitor too, and sell thy Country;

Can thy great Heart descend so vilely low,

Mix with hir'd Slaves, Bravoes, and Common Stabbers,

Nose-flitters, Ally-lurking Villains: joyn

With such a Crew, and take a Russians Wages,

To cut the throats of Wretches as they sleep?

Jaff. Thou wrong'st me, *Belvidera*! I've engag'd

With Men of Souls: fit to reform the ills

Of all Mankind: There's not a Heart amongst them,

But'stout as Death, yet honest as the Nature

Of Man first made, e'er Fraud and Vice were Fashions.

Belv. What's he, to whose curst hands last night thou gav'st me?

Was that well done? Oh! I could tell a Story

Would rouze thy Lyon-Heart out of its Den,

And make it rage with terrifying Fury.

Jaff. Speak on I charge thee!

Belv. Oh my Love! if e'er

Thy *Belvidera*'s Peace deserv'd thy Care,

Remove me from this place: Last night, last night!

Jaff. Distract me not, but give me all the Truth.

Belv. No sooner wert thou gone, and I alone,

Left in the Power of that old Son of Mischief;

No sooner was I lain on my sad Bed,

But that vile Wretch approacht me; loose, unbutton'd

Ready for Violation: Then my Heart

Throbb'd with its fears: Oh how I wept and sigh'd,

And shrunk and trembled; wish'd in vain for him

That should protect me. Thou alas! wert gone.

Jaff. Patience! sweet Heav'n, till I make vengeance sure.

Belv. He drew the hideous Dagger forth thou gav'st him,

And with upbraiding Smiles he said, Behold it,

This is the Pledge of a False Husband's Love:

And in my Arms then prest, and would have clasp'd me;

But with my Cries I scar'd his Coward Heart,

Till he withdrew, and mutter'd Vows to Hell.

These are thy Friends! with these thy Life, thy Honour,

Thy Love all stak'd, and all will go to Ruin.

Jaff. No more: I charge thee keep this Secrer close;
Clear up thy Sorrows, look as if thy Wrongs
Were all forgot, and treat him like a Friend,
As no Complaint were made. No more; retire,
Retire my Life, and doubt not of my Honour;
I'll heal its failings, and deserve thy Love.

Belv. Oh should I part with thee, I fear thou wilt
In Anger leave me, and return no more.

Jaff. Return no more! I wou'd not live without thee
Another Night to purchase the Creation.

Belv. When shall we meet again?

Jaff. Anon at Twelve!
I'll steal my self to thy expecting Arms,
Come like a Travell'd Dove, and bring thee Peace.

Belv. Indeed! *Jaff.* By all our Loves!

Belv. 'Tis hard to part:
But sure no Falshood ever lookt so fairly.
Farewell — Remember Twelve. [Ex. Belvid.

Jaff. Let Heav'n forget me
When I remember not thy Truth, thy Love.
How curst is my Condition, tofs'd and justl'd
From every Corner; Fortune's Common Fool,
The Jest of Rogues, an Instrumental Ass
For Villains to lay Loads of Shame upon,
And drive about just for their Ease and Scorn.

Enter Pierre.

Pier. *Jaff.* Who calls!

Pier. A Friend, that could have wish'd
T' have found thee otherwise imploy'd: what, hunt
A Wife on the dull soil! sure a stanch Husband
Of all Hounds is the dullest? wilt thou never,
Never be wean'd from Candles and Confections?
What Feminine Tale hast thou been listning to,
Of unair'd Shirts; Catarhs and Tooth-ach, got
By thin-sol'd Shoes? Damnation! that a Fellow
Chosen to be a Sharer in the Destruction
Of a whole People, should sneak thus in Corners
To ease his fulsom Lusts, and Fool his Mind.

Jaff. May not a Man then trifle out an hour
With a kind Woman, and not wrong his Calling?

Pier. Not in a Cause like ours. *Jaff.* Then Friend, our Cause
Is in a damn'd condition: for I'll tell thee,
That Canker-worm call'd *Letchery* has touch'd it;
'Tis Tainted vilely: would'st thou think it, *Renault*,
(That mortify'd old wither'd Winter-Rogue)

Loves

loves simple Fornication like a Priest,
I found him out for watering at my Wife:
He visited her last night like a kind Guardian:
Faith she has some Temptations, that's the truth on't.

Pier. He durst not wrong his Trust!

Jaff. 'Twas something late tho
To take the freedom of a Ladies Chamber.

Pier. Was she in Bed? *Jaff.* Yes, Faith, in Virgin sheets
White as her Bosom, *Pierre*, disht neatly up,
Might tempt a weaker Appetite to taste.
Oh how the Old Fox stunk I warrant thee,
When the rank fit was on him: *Pier.* Patience guide me!
He us'd no Violence?

Jaff. No, no! out on't, violence!
Play'd with her Neck; Brush'd her with his Grey Beard,
Struggl'd and towz'd, tickl'd her till she squeak'd a little,
May be, or so—but not a jot of violence——

Pier. Damn him.

Jaff. Ay, so say I: but hush, no more on't;
All hitherto is well, and I believe
Myself no Monster yet: Tho no Man knows
What Fate he's born to? sure 'tis near the hour
We all should meet for our concluding Orders:
Will the Ambassador be here in Person?

Pier. No: he has sent Commission to that Villain, *Renault*;
To give the Executing Charge;
I'd have thee be a Man if possible,
And keep thy Temper; for a brave Revenge.

Ne'er comes too late. *Jaff.* Fear not, I am cool as Patience:
Had he compleated my Dishonour, rather
Than hazard the Success our Hopes are ripe for,
I'd bear it all with mortifying Virtue.

Pier. He's yonder coming this way through the Hall;
His thoughts seem full. *Jaff.* Prithee retire and leave me
With him alone: I'll put him to some tryal,
See how his rotten part will bear the touching.

Pier. Be careful then.

[*Ex. Pierre.*

Jaff. Nay, never doubt, but trust me.
What, be a Devil! take a Damning Oath
For shedding Native Blood! can there be a Sin
In Merciful Repentance? Oh this Villain.

Enter Renault.

Renault. Perverse! and Peevish! what a Slave is Man!
To let his itching Flesh thus get the better of him!
Dispatch the Tool her Husband—that were well.
Who's there?

Jaff. A Man.

Ren.

Ren. My Friend, my near Ally!
The Hostage of your Faith, my Beauteous Charge, is very well.

Jaff. Sir, are you sure of that?
Stands she in perfect health? beats her Pulse even?
Neither too hot nor cold? *Ren.* What means that question?

Jaff. Oh, Women have fantastick Constitutions,
Inconstant as their wishes, always wavering,
And never fixt; was it not boldly done
Even at first sight to trust the Thing I Lov'd
(A tempting Treasure too!) with Youth so fierce
And vigorous as thine? but thou art honest.

Ren. Who dares accuse me? *Jaff.* Canst be him that doubts
Thy Virtue, I have try'd it, and declare,
Were I to chuse a Guardian of my Honour,
I'd put it in thy keeping: for I know thee. *Ren.* Know me!

Jaff. Ay, know thee: There's no Falshood in thee.
Thou look'st just as thou art: Let us embrace.
Now would'st thou cut my Throat, or I cut thine?

Ren. You dare not do't. *Jaff.* You lye, Sir,

Ren. How! *Jaff.* No more.

'Tis a Base World, and must Reform, that's all.

*Enter Spinosa, Thodore, Eliot, Revillido, Durand,
Brainveil, and the rest of the Conspirators.*

Ren. Spinosa, Theodore! *Spin.* The same: A

Ren. You are Welcome! *Spin.* You are trembling, Sir.

Ren. 'Tis a cold Night indeed, I am Aged,
Full of Decay and Natural Infirmities; [*Pierre re-enters.*]
We shall be warm, my Friend, I hope to morrow.

Pierre. 'Twas not well done; thou should'st have stroakt him,
And not have gall'd him. *Jaff.* Damn him, let him chew on't.
Heav'n! where am I? beset with Cursed Fiends,
That wait to Damn me: What a Devil's Man,
When he forgets his nature — hush my heart.

Ren. My Friends, 'tis late: are we Assembled all?
Where's Theodore? *Theo.* At hand.

Ren. Spinosa. *Spin.* Here.

Ren. Brainveil. *Brain.* I am ready.

Ren. Durand and Brabe. *Dur.* Command us;

We are both prepar'd!
Ren. Mezana, Revellido,
Ternon, Retrosi; Oh you're Men I find
Fit to behold your Fate, and meet her Summons;
To Morrow's Rising Sun must see you all
Deckt in your Honours! are the Soldiers ready?

Omnes. All, all.

Ren. You Durand, with your Thousand must Possess

Marks; You, Captain, know your Charge already;
 'Tis to secure the Ducal Palace: You
 Take with a hundred more must gain the *Secque*.
 With the like number *Brainveil* to the *Procurale*.
 Be all this done with the least tumult possible,
 Till in each place you Post sufficient Guards:
 Then sheath your Swords in every Breast you meet.

Jaff. Oh Reverend Cruelty: Damn'd Bloody Villain!

Ren. During this Execution, *Durand*, you
 Must in the midst keep your Battalia fast;
 And *Theodore* be sure to Plant the Cannon
 That may Command the Streets; whilst *Rewellido*,
Mezzona, *Ternon* and *Retrofi*, Guard you.

(This done) we'll give the General Alarm,
 Apply Petards, and force the Ars'nal Gates;
 Then Fire the City round in several places,
 Or with our Cannon (if it dare resist)
 Batter to Ruin. But above all, I charge you
 Shed Blood enough, spare neither Sex nor Age,
 Name nor Condition; if there live a Senator
 After to-morrow, tho the dullest Rogue
 That e'er said nothing, we have lost our Ends;
 If possible, let's kill the very Name
 Of Senator, and bury it in Blood.

Jaff. Merciless, horrid Slave! — Ay, Blood enough!
 Shed Blood enough, old *Renaud*: how thou charm'st me!

Ren. But one thing more, and then farewell till Fate
 Joyn us again, or separate us ever:
 First, let's embrace. Heav'n knows who next shall thus
 Wing ye together: But let's all remember
 We wear no Common Cause upon our Swords:
 Let each Man think that on his single Virtue
 Depends the Good and Fame of all the rest;
 Eternal Honour or perpetual Infamy.

Let's remember through what dreadful hazards
 Propitious Fortune hitherto has led us,
 How often on the brink of some Discovery
 Have we stood tottering, yet still kept our ground,
 So well, that the busiest Searchers ne'er could follow
 Those subtle Tracks which puzzled all Suspicion.

You droop, Sir. *Jaff*. No: with most profound Attention
 I've heard it all, and wonder at thy Vertue.

Ren. Tho there be yet few hours 'twixt them and Ruin,
 I'm not the Senate lulld in full Security,
 Quiet and satisfy'd, as Fool's are always.

Never

Never did so profound Repose fore-run
 Calamity so great: Nay, our good Fortune
 Has blinded the most Piercing of Mankind,
 Stengthen'd the Fearfullest, Charm'd the most Suspectful,
 Confounded the most Subtle: For we live,
 We live my Friends, and quickly shall our life
 Prove fatal to these Tyrants: Let's consider
 That we destroy Oppression, Avarice,
 A People nurs'd up equally with Vices
 And loathsome Lusts, which Nature most abhors,
 And such as without Shame she cannot suffer.

Jaff. Oh *Belvidera*, take me to thy Arms,
 And shew me where's my Peace, for I have lost it. [Ex. *Jaff.*

Ren. Without the least remorse then let's resolve
 With Fire and Sword t'exterminate these Tyrants,
 And when we shall behold those Curst Tribunals,
 Stain'd by the Tears and Sufferings of the Innocent,
 Burning with Flames, rather from Heav'n than ours,
 The Raging, Furious, and Unpitying Soldier
 Pulling his reaking Dagger from the Bosoms
 Of gasping Wretches; Death in every Quarter,
 With all that sad Disorder can produce,
 To make a Spectacle of Horror. Then,
 Then let us call to mind, my dearest Friends,
 That there is nothing pure upon the Earth;
 That the most valu'd things have most allays,
 And that in change of all those vile Enormities,
 Under whose weight this wretched Country labours,
 The means are only in our hands to Crown them.

Pier. And may those Powers above that are propitious
 To Gallant Minds, Record this Cause, and Bless it.

Ren. Thus happy, thus secure of all we wish for,
 Should there my Friends, be found amongst us one
 False to this Glorious Enterprize, what Fate,
 What Vengeance were enough for such a Villain?

Eliot. Death here without repentance, Hell hereafter.

Ren. Let that be my Lot, if as here I stand,
 Listed by Fate amongst her darling Sons,
 Tho I had one only Brother, dear by all
 The strictest eyes of Nature; tho one hour
 Had given us Birth, one Fortune fed our Wants,
 One only Love; and that but of each other,
 Still fill'd our minds: Could I have such a Friend
 Joyn'd in this Cause, and had but ground to fear
 He meant foul play; may this right hand drop from me,
 If I'd not hazard all my future Peace,

And stab him to the heart before you: Who?
Who would do less? Would't not thou *Pierre* the same?

Pier. You've singl'd me, Sir, out for this hard question,
As if 'twere started only for my sake!

Am I the thing you fear? Here, here's my Bosom,
Search it with all your Swords! Am I a Traitor?

Ren. No: but I fear your late commended Friend
Is little less: Come Sirs, 'tis now no time
To trifle with our Safety. Where's this *Jaffair*?

Spino. He left the Room just now in strange disorder.

Ren. Nay, there is danger in him: I observ'd him,
During the time I took for Explanation,
He was transported from most deep attention
To a Confusion which he could not smother.
His Looks grew full of sadness and surprize,
All which betray'd a wav'ring Spirit in him,
That labour'd with reluctance and sorrow.
What's requisite for safety, must be done
With speedy Execution, he remains
Yet in our Power: I for my own part wear

A Dagger. *Pier.* Well.

Ren. And I could wish it! *Pier.* Where?

Ren. Bury'd in his heart. *Pier.* Away! we're yet all Friends;
No more of this, 'twill breed ill Blood amongst us.

Spin. Let us all draw our Swords, and search the House,
Pull him from the dark hole where he sits brooding
O'er his cold Fears, and each Man kill his share of him.

Pier. Who talks of killing? who's he'll shed the Blood
That's dear to me! is't you? or you? or you, Sir?
What, not one speak? how you stand gaping all
On your grave Oracle, your Wooden God there;
Yet not a word: Then Sir, I'll tell y' a secret;
Suspicion's but at best a Coward's Virtue!

Ren. A Coward ——— [To *Ren.*
[Handles his Sword.

Pier. Put up the Sword, old Man,
Thy hand shakes at it; come let's heal this breach,
I am too hot: we yet may all live Friends:

Spin. Till we are safe, our Friendship cannot be so.

Pier. Again: Who's that? *Spin.* 'Twas I.

Theo. And I. *Revel.* And I.

Eliot. And all. *Ren.* Who are on my side?

Spinof. Every honest Sword.

Let's die like Men, and not be sold like Slaves.

Pier. One such word more, by Heav'n I'll to the Senate,
And hang ye all like Dogs, in Clusters.

Why peep your Coward Swords half out their shells?
 Why do you not all Brandish them like mine?
 You fear to Die, and yet dare talk of Killing.

Ren. Go to the Senate and Betray us; haste,
 Secure thy wretched Life; we fear to Die
 Less than thou dar'st be Honest.

Pier. That's rank Falshood.

Fear'st not thou Death? Fy, there's a Knavish Itch
 In that Salt Blood, an utter Foe to Smarting.
 Had *Jaffeir's* Wife prov'd Kind, he'd still been True.
 Faugh——How that Sinks?

Thou Dye! Thou Kill my Friend, or thou, or thou,
 Or thou, with that lean wither'd wretched Face!

Away, disperse all to your several Charges,
 And meet to-morrow where your Honour calls you,
 I'll bring that Man, whose Blood you so much Thirst for,
 And you shall see him venture for you fairly——
 Hence, hence, I say. [Ex. *Renault* *Angrily*.

Spinoza. I fear we've been to Blame;
 And done too much.

Theo. 'Twas too far urg'd against the Man you Lov'd.

Rev. Here, take our Swords, and crush them with your Feet.

Spino. Forgive us, Gallant Friend.

Pier. Nay, now y'have found
 The way to melt, and cast me as you will:
 I'll fetch this Friend, and give him to your Mercy:
 Nay he shall die, if you will take him from me.
 For your Repose, I'll quit my Heart's Jewel;
 But would not have him torn away by Villains
 And Spiteful Villany.

Spino. No; may you both
 For ever Live, and fill the World with Fame!

Pier. Now y'are too kind. Whence rose all this Discord?
 Oh what a dangerous Precipice have we 'scap'd!
 How near a Fall was all we'd long been Building!
 What an Eternal Blot had Stain'd our Glories!
 If One, the Bravest, and the Best of Men
 Had fall'n a Sacrifice to Rash Suspicion!
 Butcher'd by those, whose Cause he came to Cherish:
 Oh could you know him all as I have known him,
 How Good he is, how Just, how True, how Brave,
 You would not leave this place till you had seen him;
 Humbled your selves before him, kiss'd his Feet,
 And gain'd Remission for the worst of Follies.

Come but to-morrow all your Doubts shall end,

And to your Loves me better recommend,

That I've preserv'd your Fame, and sav'd my Friend.

The End of the Third Act.

[Ex. *Omnes*.

A C T.

A C T. IV.

Enter Jaffeir and Belvidera.

Jaff. **W**Here do'st thou lead me? Every step I move,
Methinks I tread upon some mangled Limb
Of a Rack'd Friend: Oh my dear Charming Ruin!
Where are we wandring? *Belv.* To Eternal Honour;

To do a Deed shall Chronicle thy Name,
Among the Glorious Legends of those Few
That have Sav'd Sinking Nations: Thy Renown
Shall be the future Song of all the Virgins,
Who by thy Piety have been Preserv'd
From horrid Violation: Every Street
Shall be Adorn'd with Statues to thy Honour,
And at thy Feet this great Inscription written,
Remember Him that Propt the Fall of Venice.

Jaff. Rather, remember Him, who after all
The Sacred Bonds of Oaths and Holier Friendship,
In fond Compassion to a Woman's Tears
Forgot his Manhood, Virtue, Truth, and Honour,
To Sacrifice the Bosom that Reliev'd him,
Why wilt thou Damn me? *Belv.* Oh inconstant Man!

How will you Promise? how will you Deceive?
Do, return back, re-place me in my Bondage,
Tell all thy Friends how dangerously thou Lov'st me;
And let thy Dagger do its Bloody Office.
Oh that kind Dagger, *Jaffeir*, how 'twill look,
Struck through my Heart, Drench'd in my Blood to th' Hilt!

Whilst these poor dying Eyes shall with their Tears
No more Torment thee; then thou wilt be Free:

Or if thou think'st it Nobler; let me Live
Till I'm a Victim to the hateful Lust

Of that Infernal Devil, that Old Fiend
That's Damn'd himself, and wou'd Undo Mankind.

Last Night, my Love! *Jaff.* Name, name it not again.

It shews a Beastly Image to my Fancy;
Will wake me into Madness. Oh the Villain!

That durst approach such Purity as thine,
On Terms so Vile: Destruction, swift Destruction

Call on my Coward Head, and make my Name
The common Scorn of Fools, if I forgive him;

I forgive him; if I not Revenge
With utmost Rage, and most unstaying Fury,

Thy Suffering, thou dear Darling of my Life.

Belv. Delay no longer then, but to the Senate;
And tell the dismal'st Story ever utter'd:

Tell 'em what Bloodshed, Rapines, Desolations,
Have been prepar'd; how near's the fatal hour!

Save thy poor Country, save the Reverend Blood
Of all its Nobles, which to-Morrow's Dawn

Must else see shed: Save the poor tender lives

Of all these little Infants, which the Swords

Of Murtherers are whetting for this moment;

Think thou already heard'st their dying screams,

Think that thou see'st their sad distracted Mothers

Kneeling before thy feet, and begging Pity,

With torn dishevel'd Hair, and streaming Eyes,

Their naked mangled Breasts besmear'd with Blood,

And even the Milk with which their fondled Babes

Softly they hush'd, dropping in Anguish from 'em.

Think thou see'st this, and then consult thy heart.

Jaff. Oh! *Belv.* Think too, if you lose this present minute,
What Miseries the next day bring upon thee.

Imagine all the horrors of that night,

Murder and Rapine, Waste and Desolation,

Confus'dly raging. Think what then may prove

My Lot! the Ravisher may then come safe,

And 'midst the terror of the Publick Ruin

Do a damn'd deed; perhaps to lay a Train

May catch thy Life; then where will be Revenge,

The dear Revenge that's due to such a Wrong?

Jaff. By all Heav'n's Powers, Prophetick Truth dwells in thee,
For every word thou speak'st strikes through my heart

Like a new light, and shews it how't has wander'd.

Just what th' hast made me, take me, *Belvidera*,

And lead me to the place where I'm to say

This bitter Lesson; where I must betray

My Truth, my Virtue, Constancy and Friends;

Must I betray my Friend! Ah take me quickly,

Secure me well before that Thought's renew'd;

If I relapse once more, all's lost for ever.

Belv. Hast thou a Friend more dear than *Belvidera*?

Jaff. No; thou art my Soul it self, Wealth, Friendship, Honour;
All present Joys, and earnest of all future,

Are summ'd in thee: methinks when in thy Arms

Thus leaning on thy Breast, one minute's more

Than a long thousand years of vulgar hours.

Why was such Happiness not given me pure?

Why

Why dash'd with cruel wrongs, and bitter wantings?
Come, lead me forward now like a tame Lamb
To Sacrifice. Thus in his fatal Garlands,
Deck'd fine, and pleas'd, the Wanton skips and plays,
Trots by th' enticing flattering Priestess side,
And much transported with its little pride,
Forgets his dear Companions of the Plain;
Till by her bound, he's on the Altar lain,
Yet then too hardly bleats, such Pleasure's in the Pain.

Enter Officer and six Guards.

Officer. Stand, who goes there? *Belv. Friends.*

Jaff. Friends, *Belvedira!* hide me from my Friends.
By Heav'n, I'd rather see the face of Hell,
Than meet the Man I love.

Offic. But what Friends are you?

Belv. Friends to the Senate and the State of *Venice.*

Offic. My Orders are to seize on all I find
At this late hour, and bring 'em to the Council,
Who now are sitting. *Jaff.* Sir, you shall be obey'd.

Hold, Brutes, stand off, none of your Paws upon me.
Now the Lot's cast, and Fate do what thou wilt. *[Exeunt guarded.]*

SCENE *The Senate-house :*

*Where appear Sitting, the Duke of Venice, Priuli, Antonio, and
Eight other Senators.*

Duke. Antony, Priuli, Senators of *Venice,*
Speak; why are we Assembled here this night?
What have you to inform us of, concerns
The State of *Venice,* Honour, or its Safety?

Priu. Could words express the Story I've to tell you,
Fathers, these Tears were useless, these sad Tears
That fall from my old eyes; but there is cause
We all should weep, tear off these Purple Robes,
And wrap our selves in Sackcloth, sitting down
On the sad Earth, and cry aloud to Heav'n.
Heav'n knows if yet there be an hour to come
E'er *Venice* be no more.

All Senators. How! *Priu.* Nay, we stand
Upon the very brink of gaping Ruin,
Within this City's form'd a dark Conspiracy,
To Massacre us all, our Wives and Children,
Kindred and Friends; our Palaces and Temples
To lay in Ashes: nay, the hour too, fixt;
The Swords, for ought I know, drawn e'en this moment,
And the wild Waste begun. From unknown hands

I had

I had this Warning : but if we are Men
 Let's not be Tamely Butcher'd, but do something
 That may inform the World in after-Ages,
 Our Virtue was not Ruin'd, tho' we were. [A Noise without.
 Room, room, make room for some Prisoners —

2. *Senat.* Let's Raise the City.

Enter Officer and Guard.

Priu. Speak there, What Disturbance?

Officer. Two Prisoners have the Guard seiz'd in the Streets,
 Who say, they come to inform this Reverend Senate
 About the present Danger.

Enter Jaffeir and Belvidera Guarded.

All. Give 'em Entrance — Well, who are you?

Jaff. A Villain.

Anto. Short and Pithy.

The Man speaks well. *Jaff.* Would every Man that hears me
 Would deal so Honestly, and own his Title.

Duke. 'Tis Rumor'd, that a Plot has been contriv'd
 Against this State; that you have a share in't too.
 If you are a Villain, to Redeem your Honour,
 Unfold the Truth, and be Restor'd with Mercy.

Jaff. Think not that I to save my Life come hither;
 I know its value better; but in Pity

To all those Wretches, whose unhappy Dooms
 Are Fixt and Seal'd: You see me here before you,
 The Sworn, and Covenanted Foe of Venice.

But use me as my Dealings may deserve;

And I may prove a Friend.

Duke. The Slave Capitulates.

Give him the Tortures.

Jaff. That you dare not do,

Your Fears won't let you, nor the longing Itch

To hear a Story which you dread the truth of.

Truth, which the fear of Smart shall ne'er get from me.

Cowards are scar'd with Threatnings: Boys are whipt

Into Confessions: but a steady Mind

Acts of it self, ne'er asks the Body Counsel.

Give him the Tortures! Name but such a thing

Again; by Heav'n I'll shut these Lips for ever,

Not all your Racks, your Engines, or your Wheels,

Shall force a Groan away — that you may Guess at.

Anto. A Bloody-minded Fellow I'll warrant;

A damn'd bloody-minded Fellow.

Duke. Name your Conditions.

Jaff. For my self full Pardon.

B sides the Lives of two and twenty Friends

[Delivers a List.

Whose Names are here Enroll'd: Nay, let their Crimes

Be ne'er so Monstrous, — I must have the Oaths

And Sacred Promise of this Reverend Council,

That in a full Assembly of the Senate

The

The Thing I ask be Ratify'd. Swear this,
And I'll unfold the Secrets of your Danger.

All. We'll Swear.

Duke. Propose the Oath.

Jaff. By all the hopes
Ye have of Peace and Happiness hereafter,
Swear.

All. We all Swear.

Jaff. To Grant me what I've ask'd,
Ye Swear.

All. We Swear.

Jaff. And as ye keep the Oath,
May you and your Posterity be Blest,
Or Curst for ever.

All. Else be Curst for ever!

Jaff. Then here's the List, and with't the full Disclose } *Delivers a-*
Of all that Threatens you. } *nother Paper.*
Now Fate thou hast caught me.

Anto. Why, what a dreadful Catalogue of Cut-throats is here!
I'll warrant you not one of these Fellows but has a Face like a Lion.
I dare not so much as read their Names over.

Duke. Give Order that all diligent Search be made
To seize these Men; their Characters are Publick,
The Paper intimates their Rendezvous
To be at the House of a Fam'd Grecian Curtezan,
Call'd *Aquilina*; see that place secur'd.

Anto. What my Nicky Nacky, Hurry Durry, Nicky Nacky in
the Plot—I'll make a Speech. Most Noble Senators,
What headlong Apprehensions drive you on,
Right Noble, Wise, and truly Solid Senators,
To Violate the Laws and Right of Nations?
The Lady is a Lady of Renown.

'Tis true, she holds a House of fair Réception,
And tho I say't my self, as many more
Can say as well as I.

2. *Senat.* My Lord, long Speeches

Are Frivolous here, when Dangers are so near us;
We all well know your Interest in that Lady;
The World talks loud on't.

Anto. Verily I have done;

I say no more. *Duke.* But since he has declar'd
Himself concern'd, Pray, Captain, take great Caution
To treat the Fair One as becomes her Character,
And let her Bed-Chamber be Search'd with Decency.

You, *Jaffeir*, must with Patience bear till Morning,
To be our Prisoner.

Jaff. Would the Chains of Death

Had bound me fast e'er I had known this minute.
I've done a Deed will make my Story hereafter
Quoted in competition with all ill ones:

The History of my Wickedness shall run
Down through the low Traditions of the Vulgar,
And Boys be taught to tell the Tale of *Jaffeir*.

Duke.

Duke. Captain withdraw your Prisoner.

Jaff. Sir, if possible,

Lead me where my own thoughts themselves may lose me;
Where I may doze out what I've left of Life,
Forget my self and this day's Guilt and Falshood.
Cruel Remembrance, how shall I appease thee!

[Ex. Guarded.

Noise without.

More Traitors; Room, room, make room there.

Duke. How's this, Guards?

Where are our Guards? shut up the Gates, the Treason's already
at our Doors.

Enter Officer.

Offic. My Lords, more Traitors:
Seiz'd in the very Act of Consultation;
Furnisht with Arms and Instruments of Mischief.
Bring in the Prisoners.

Enter Pierre, Renault, Theodore, Eliot, Revellido,
and other Conspirators, in Fetters, Guarded.

Pierre. You, my Lords and Fathers,
(As you are pleas'd to call your selves) of Venice;
If you sit here to guide the Course of Justice,
Why these Disgraceful Chains upon the Limbs
That have so often labour'd in your Service?
Are these the Wreaths of Triumphs ye bestow
On those that bring you Conquests home, and Honours?

Duke. Go on, you shall be heard, Sir.

Anto. And be hang'd too, I hope.

Pier. Are these the Trophies I've deserv'd for fighting
Your Battels with confederated Powers?
When Winds and Seas conspir'd to overthrow you,
And brought the Fleets of Spain to your own Harbours:
When you, great Duke, shrunk, trembling in your Palace,
And saw your Wife, th' Adriatic Plough'd
Like a Lewd Whore by bolder Prows than yours,
Stept not I forth, and taught your loose Venetians,
The task of Honour, and the way to Greatness!
Rais'd you from your capitulating Fears,
To stipulate the Terms of su'd-for Peace?
And this my Recompence? If I'm a Traitor,
Produce my Charge; or shew the Wretch that's base enough
And brave enough to tell me I'm a Traitor.

Duke. Know you one Jaffair?

[All the Conspirators murmur.

Pier. Yes, and know his Virtue.

His Justice, Truth, his general Worth and Sufferings
From a hard Father taught me first to love him.

Enter

A Plot Discover'd.

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Enter Jaffeir Guarded.

Duke. See him brought forth.

Pier. My Friend too bound! nay then
Our Fate has conquer'd us, and we must fall.
Why droops the Man whose Welfare's so much mine
They're but one thing? These Reverend Tyrants, *Jaffeir*,
Call us all Traitors: Art thou one, my Brother?

Jaff. To thee I am the falsest, veriest Slave
That e'er Betray'd a Generous, Trusting Friend,
And gave up Honour to be sure of Ruin:
All our fair Hopes which Morning was to have Crown'd,
Has this curst Tongue o'erthrown.

Pier. So, then all's over:
Venice has lost her Freedom; I my Life;
No more; farewell.

Duke. Say; will you make Confession
Of your vile Deeds, and trust the Senate's Mercy?

Pier. Curst be your Senate: Curst your Constitution:
The Curse of growing Factions and Division
Still vex your Councils, shake your Publick Safety,
And make the Robes of Government you wear,
Hateful to you, as these base Chains to me.

Duke. Pardon, or Death? *Pier.* Death, Honourable Death.

Renault. Death's the best thing we ask, or you can give.

All Conspir. No Shameful Bonds, but Honourable Death.

Duke. Break up the Council: Captain, guard your Prisoners.
Jaffeir, y'are Free, but these must wait for Judgment.

[*Ex. all the Senators.*]

Pier. Come, where's my Dungeon? lead me to my Straw:
It will not be the first time I've lodg'd hard
To do your Senate Service.

Jaff. Hold one moment.

Pier. Who's he disputes the Judgment of the Senate?
Presumptuous Rebel — on —

[*Strikes Jaff.*]

Jaff. By Heav'n you stir not.
I must be heard, I must have leave to speak:
Thou hast disgrac'd me, *Pierre*, by a vile Blow:
Had not a Dagger done thee Nobler Justice?
But use me as thou wilt, thou canst not wrong me,
For I am fall'n beneath the basest Injuries;
Yet look upon me with an Eye of Mercy,
With Pity and with Charity behold me;
Shut not thy heart against a Friend's Repentance,
But as there dwells a God-like Nature in thee,
Listen with Mildness to my Supplications.

Pier. What whining Monk art thou? what holy Cheat
That would'st encroach upon my credulous ears,

G

And

And Cant'st thus vilely? Hence. I know thee not,
Dissemble and be Nasty: leave, Hypocrite.

Jaff. Not know me, *Pierre!*

Pier. No, know thee not, what art thou?

Jaff. *Jaffeir*, thy Friend, thy once lov'd, valu'd Friend,
Tho now deserv'dly scorn'd, and us'd most hardly.

Pier. Thou *Jaffeir*! thou my once lov'd, valu'd friend!
By Heavens thou ly'st; the Man so call'd, my Friend,
Was Generous, Honest, Faithful, Just and Valiant,
Noble in Mind, and in his Person Lovely,
Dear to my Eyes and tender to my Heart:
But Thou, a Wretched, Base, False, Worthless Coward,
Poor, even in Soul, and Loathsome in thy Aspect:
All eyes must shun thee, and all hearts detest thee.
Prithee avoid, nor longer cling thus round me,
Like something baneful, that my Nature's chill'd at.

Jaff. I have not wrong'd thee, by these Tears I have not.
But still am Honest, True, and hope too, Valiant;
My Mind still full of thee: therefore still Noble.
Let not thy Eyes then shun me, nor thy Heart
Detest me utterly: Oh look upon me,
Look back and see my sad, sincere Submission!
How my Heart swells, as even 'twould burst my Bosom;
Fond of its Gaol, and labouring to be at thee!
What shall I do? what say to make thee hear me?

Pier. Hast thou not wrong'd me? dar'st thou call thy self,
That once lov'd, valu'd Friend of mine,
And swear thou hast not wrong'd me? Whence these Chains?
Whence the vile Death, which I may meet this moment?
Whence this Dishonour, but from thee, thou False one?

Jaff. — All's true, yet grant one thing, and I've done asking.

Pier. What's that? *Jaff.* To take thy Life on such Conditions
The Council have propos'd: Thou and thy Friends
May yet live long, and to be better treated.

Pier. Life! ask my Life! Confess! Record my self
A Villain, for the privilege to breathe,
And carry up and down this Cursed City
A discontented and repining Spirit,
Burthen some to it self, a few years longer,
To lose, it may be, at last in a lewd quarrel
For some new Friend, Treacherous and false as thou art!
No, this vile World and I have long been Jangling,
And cannot part on better Terms than now,
When only Men like thee are fit to live in't.

Jaff. By all that's Just — *Pier.* Swear by some other Powers,
For thou hast broke that Sacred Oath too lately.

Jaff. Then by that Hell I merit, I'll not leave thee
Till to thy self at least, thou'rt Reconciled;
However thy Resentments deal with me.

Pier. Not leave me!

Jaff. No; Thou shalt not force me from thee:
Use me Reproachfully, and like a Slave;
Tread on me, Buffet me, heap Wrongs on Wrongs
On my poor Head; I'll bear it all with Patience,
Shall weary out thy most Unfriendly Cruelty:
Lie at thy Feet and kiss 'em, tho they spurn me,
Till, wounded by my Sufferings, you Relent,
And raise me to thy Arms with dear Forgiveness.

Pier. Art thou not —

Jaff. What?

Pier. A Traitor?

Jaff. Yes.

Pier. A Villain?

Jaff. Granted.

Pier. A Coward, a most Scandalous Coward,
Spiritless, void of Honour, one who has sold
Thy Everlasting Fame for Shameless Life?

Jaff. All, all, and more, much more: my Faults are numberless.

Pier. And would'st thou have me live on terms like thine?

Safe as thou'rt false —

Jaff. No, 'tis to me that's granted.

The Safety of thy Life was all I aim'd at,
In recompence for Faith and Trust so broken.

Pier. I scorn it more because preserv'd by thee:
And as when first my foolish heart took pity
On thy Misfortunes, sought thee in thy Miseries,
Reliev'd thy Wants, and rais'd thee from thy state
Of Wretchedness in which thy Fate had plung'd thee;
To rank thee in my List of Noble Friends;

All I receiv'd in surety for thy Truth,
Were unregarded Oaths; and this, this Dagger,
Given with a worthless Pledge, thou since hast stoln:
So I restore it back to thee again;
Sweating by all those Powers which thou hast Violated,
Never from this Curs'd Hour to hold Communion,
Friendship or Interest with thee, though our years
Were to exceed those limited the World.

Take it — farewell — for now I owe thee nothing.

Jaff. Say thou wilt live then.

Pier. For my Life, dispose it

As thou wilt, because 'tis what I'm tir'd with.

Jaff. Oh, *Pierre*!

Pierre. No more.

Jaff. My Eyes won't lose the sight of thee,
But languish after thine, and ake with gazing.

Pier. Leave me — Nay, then thus, thus I throw thee from me;
And Curses great as is thy Falshood catch thee.

Jaff. Amen.

He's gone, my Father, Friend, Preserver,
And here's the Portion he has left me.

[Holds the Dagger]

This Dagger, well remembred, with this Dagger
I gave a Solemn Vow of dire Importance;
Parted with this and *Belvidera* together.

Have a care, Mem'ry, drive that Thought no farther;
No, I'll esteem it as a Friend's last Legacy,
Treasure it up within this wretched Bosom,
Where it may grow acquainted with my heart,
That when they meet, they start not from each other.
So; now for thinking: A Blow, call'd Traitor, Villain,
Coward, dishonourable Coward, fough!
Oh for a long sound sleep, and so forget it!
Down, busie Devil.

Enter *Belvidera*.

Belv. Whither shall I fly?

Where hide me and my Miseries together?
Where's now the *Roman* Constancy I boasted?
Sunk into Trembling Fears and Desperation!
Not daring now to look up to that dear Face
Which us'd to smile even on my Faults, but down
Bending these miserable eyes to Earth,
Must move in Penance, and implore much Mercy.

Jaff. Mercy! kind Heav'n has surely endless Stores
Hoarded for thee of Blessings yet untasted;
Let Wretches loaded hard with Guilt as I am,
Bow with the Weight, and groan beneath the Burthen,
Creep with a remnant of that Strength th' have left,
Before the Footstool of that Heav'n th' have injured.
Oh *Belvidera*! I'm the wretched'st Creature
E'er crawl'd on Earth: now if thou'st Virtue, help me,
Take me into thy Arms, and speak the words of Peace
To my Divided Soul, that wars within me,
And raises every Sense to my Confusion;
By Heav'n I'm tottering on the very brink
Of Peace; and thou art all the hold I've left.

Belv. Alas! I know thy Sorrows are most Mighty;
I know th' hast cause to Mourn; to Mourn, my *Jaffier*,
With endless Cries, and never-ceasing Wailings,
Th' hast lost ———

Jaff. Oh I've lost what can't be Counted
My Friend too, *Belvidera*, that dear Friend,
Who, next to thee, was all my health rejoyc'd in,
Has us'd me like a Slave; shamefully us'd me;
I would break thy pitying heart to hear the story.
What shall I do? Resentment, Indignation,

Love, Pity, Fear, and Mem'ry how I've Wrong'd him,
Distract my quiet with the very Thought on't,
And tear my Heart to pieces in my Bosom.

Belv. What has he done?

Jaff. Thou'dst hate me, should I tell thee.

Belv. Why?

Jaff. Oh he has us'd me! yet by Heav'n I bear it;
He has us'd me, *Belvidera*; but first swear
That when I've told thee, thou wilt not loathe me utterly;
Tho vilest Blots and Stains appear upon me;
But still at least with Charitable Goodness,
Be near me in the Pangs of my Affliction;
Not Scorn me, *Belvidera*, as he has done.

Belv. Have I then e'er been False that now I'm Doubted?
Speak, what's the cause I'm grown into Distrust?

Why thought unfit to hear my Love's Complaining? *Jaff.* Oh!

Belv. Tell me.

Jaff. Bear my Failings for they're many,
Oh my dear Angel! in that Friend I've lost
All my Soul's Peace; for every Thought of him
Strikes my Sense hard, and dead's it in my Brains;
Would'st thou believe it?

Belv. Speak.

Jaff. Before we parted,
E'er yet his Guards had led him to his Prison,
Full of severest Sorrows for his Sufferings,
With Eyes o'erflowing, and a Bleeding Heart,
Humbling my self almost beneath my Nature;
As at his Feet I kneel'd, and su'd for Mercy,
Forgetting all our Friendship, all the dearness
In which we've liv'd so many years together,
With a Reproachful Hand he dash'd a Blow:
He struck me, *Belvidera*, by Heav'n he struck me,
Buffeted, call'd me Traitor, Villain, Coward.
Am I a Coward? am I a Villain? tell me:
Th'art the best Judge, and mad'st me, if I am so.
Damnation; Coward!

Belv. Oh Forgive him, *Jaffier*,
And if his Sufferings wound thy Heart already,
What will they do to-morrow?

Jaff. Hah!

Belv. To-morrow,
When thou shalt see him stretch'd in all the Agonies
Of a Tormenting and a Shameful Death;
His bleeding Bowels and his broken Limbs,
Insulted o'er by a vile Butchering Villain;
What will thy Heart do then? Oh sure 'twill stream
Like my Eyes now.

Jaff. What means thy dreadful Story?
Death, and to-morrow? Broken Limbs and Bowels?
Insulted o'er by a vile Butchering Villain?

By

By all my Fears I shall start out to Madness,
With barely guessing, if the Truth's hid longer.

Belv. The Faithless Senators, 'tis they've decreed it:
They say, according to our Friend's request,
They shall have Death, and not Ignoble Bondage:
Declare their promis'd Mercy all as Forfeited;
False to their Oaths, and Deaf to Intercession;
Warrants are pass'd for Publick Death to-morrow.

Jaff. Death! doom'd to die! Condemn'd unheard! unpleaded!

Belv. Nay, cruel'st Racks and Torments are preparing,
To force Confessions from their dying Pangs.
Oh do not look so terribly upon me;
How your Lips shake, and all your Face disorder'd?
What means my Love?

Jaff. Leave me, I charge thee leave me—Strong Temptations
Wake in my Heart.

Belv. For what?

Jaff. No more, but leave me.

Belv. Why?

Jaff. Oh! By Heav'n I love thee with that Fondness,
I would not have thee stay a moment longer,
Near these curst hands: are they not cold upon thee?

Bel. No, everlasting Comfort's in thy Arms, { Pulls the Dagger half
out of his Bosom, and
puts it back again.
To lean thus on thy Breast is softer ease,
Than downy Pillows deck'd with Leaves of Roses.

Jaff. Alas! thou thinkest not of the Thorns 'tis fill'd with:
Fly, e'er they call thee: there's a lurking Serpent
Ready to leap, and Sting thee to thy Heart:
Art thou not terrify'd?

Belv. No.

Jaff. Call to mind
What thou hast done, and whither thou hast brought me.

Belv. Hah!

Jaff. Where's my Friend? my Friend, thou Smiling Mischief?
Nay, shrink not, now 'tis too late, thou should'st have fled
When thy Guilt first had cause; for dire Revenge,
Is up, and Raging for my Friend. He groans!
Hark how he groans, his screams are in my Ears
Already; see, they've fix'd him on the Wheel,
And now they tear him—Murder! Perjur'd Senate!
Murder—Oh!—hark thee, Traitors, thou hast done this;
Thanks to thy Tears and false perswading Love. { Fumbling for
his Dagger.
How her Eyes speak! O thou Bewitching Creature!
Madness can't hurt thee: Come, thou little Trembler,
Creep even into my heart, and there lie safe;
'Tis thy own Citadel—hah—yet stand off,
Heav'n must have Justice, and my broken Vows
Will sink me else beneath its reaching Mercy;
I'll wait, and then 'tis done——

Belv.

Belv. What means the Lord
Of me, my Life and Love ? what's in thy Bosom,
Thou graspest at so ? nay, why am I thus treated ? *{ Draws the Dagger,*
What wilt thou do ? Ah do not kill me, *Jaffair : { offers to Stab her.*
Pity these panting Breasts, and trembling Limbs,
That us'd to clasp thee when thy Looks were milder,
That yet hang heavy on my unpurg'd Soul:
And plunge it not into Eternal Darkness.

Jaff. No, *Belvidera*, when we parted last,
I gave this Dagger with thee as in trust,
To be thy Portion ; If I e're prov'd False.
On such Condition was my Truth believ'd ;
But now 'tis forfeited, and must be paid for. *[Offers to Stab her again.*

Belv. Oh, Mercy !

[Kneeling.

Jaff. Nay, no Strugling.

Belv. Now then Kill me. *[Leaps upon his Neck and Kisses him.*

While thus I cling about thy Cruel Neck,
Kiss thy Revengeful Lips, and die in Joys
Greater than any I can guess hereafter.

Jaff. I am, I am a Coward ; witness't Heav'n,
Witness it, Earth, and ev'ry Being, witness ;
Tis but one Blow ! yet, by Immortal Love,
I cannot longer bear a Thought to harm thee. *{ He throws away the Dag-
ger and Embraces her.*
The Seal of Providence is sure upon thee ;
And thou wer't Born for yet unheard-of Wonders :

Oh thou wert either born to Save or Damn me !
By all the Power that's given thee o'er my Soul,
By thy Resistless Tears and Conquering Smiles,
By the Victorious Love that still waits on thee ;
By to thy Cruel Father ; save my Friend,
Or all our future Quiet's lost for ever :
Fall at his Feet, cling round his Reverend Knees ;
Speak to him with thy Eyes, and with thy Tears
Melt his hard Heart, and wake dead Nature in him,
Crush him in th' Arms, Torture him with thy Softness :

Nor, till thy Prayers are granted, set him free,
But Conquer him, as thou hast Conquer'd me.

[Ex. Ambo.

The End of the Fourth Act.

A C T.

Priu. **W**H Y, Cruel Heav'n, have my unhappy days
 Been lengthen'd to this sad one? Oh! Dishonour
 And Deathless Infamy is fall'n upon me.
 Was it my fault? am I Traitor? No.
 But then, my only Child, my Daughter, Wedded;
 There my best Blood runs foul, and a Disease
 Incurable has seiz'd upon my Memory,
 To make it Rot and Stink to after-Ages.
 Curs'd be the Fatal minute when I Got her;
 Or wou'd that I'd been any thing but Man,
 And rais'd an Issue which wou'd ne'er have wrong'd me.
 The miserablest Creatures (Man excepted.)
 Are not the less esteem'd, tho' their Posterity
 Degenerate from the Virtues of their Fathers;
 The vilest Beasts are happy in their Off-springs,
 While only Man gets Traitors, Whores, and Villains.
 Curst be the Names, and some swift Blow from Fate
 Lay his Head deep, where mine may be forgotten.

Enter Belvidera in a long Mourning Veil.

Belv. He's there, my Father, my Inhuman Father,
 That, for three years, has left an only Child
 Expos'd to all the Outrages of Fate,
 And Cruel Ruin — oh! —

Priu. What Child of Sorrow
 Art thou that com'st thus wrap'd in Weeds of Sadness,
 And mov'st as if thy steps were towards a Grave?

Belv. A Wretch, who from the very top of Happiness
 Am fall'n into the lowest depths of Misery,
 And want your pitying hand to raise me up again.

Priu. Indeed thou talk'st as thou hadst tasted Sorrows;
 Would I could help thee.

Belv. 'Tis greatly in your Power:
 The World too, speaks you Charitable; and I,
 Who ne'er ask'd Alms before, in that dear hope
 Am come a Begging to you, Sir. *Priu.* For what?

Belv. Oh, well regard me, is this Voice a strange one?
 Consider too, when Beggars once pretend
 A Case like mine, no little will content 'em.

Priu. What wou'd'st thou Beg for?

Belv. Pity and Forgiveness.
 By the kind tender Names of Child and Father,
 Hear my Complaints, and take me to your Love.

[Throws up her Veil.]

Prin. My Daughter? *Bel.* Yes, your Daughter, by a Mother
Virtuous and Noble, Faithful to your Honour,
Obedient to your Will, Kind to your Wishes,
Dear to your Arms. By all the Joys she gave you,
When in her Blooming Years she was your Treasure,
Look kindly on me; in my Face behold
The Lineaments of hers y've Kiss'd so often,
Pleading the Cause of your poor cast-off Child.

Prin. Thou art my Daughter. *Bel.* Yes—And y've oft told me
With Smiles of Love, and Chaste Paternal Kisses,
I'd much Resemblance of my Mother. *Prin.* Oh!
Had'st thou Inherited her Matchless Virtues
I'd been too Bless'd.

Bel. Nay, do not call to Memory
My Disobedience, but let Pity enter
Into your Heart, and quite deface th' Impression.
For could you think how mine's perplex'd, what Sadness,
Fears and Despairs distract the Peace within me,
Oh! you would take me in your dear dear Arms,
Hover with strong Compassion o'er your Young One,
To Shelter me with a Protecting Wing,
From the black gather'd Storm, that's just, just breaking.

Prin. Don't talk thus. *Bel.* Yes, I must, and you must hear too.
I have a Husband. *Prin.* Damn him.

Bel. Oh! do not Curse him;
He would not speak so hard a word towards you
On any Terms, howe'er he deal with me.

Prin. Hah! What means my Child?

Bel. Oh! there's but this short moment
'Twixt me and Fate: Yet send me not with Curses
Down to my Grave; afford me one kind Blessing
Before we part: just take me in your Arms,
And recommend me with a Prayer to Heav'n,
That I may dye in Peace, and when I'm Dead——

Prin. How my Soul's catcht?

Bel. Lay me, I beg you, lay me
By the dear Ashes of my tender Mother.
She would have pitied me, had Fate yet spar'd her.

Prin. By Heav'n, my aking Heart forebodes much Mischief.
Tell me thy Story, for I'm still thy Father.

Bel. No, I'm contented.

Prin. Speak.

Bel. No matter.

Prin. Tell me.

By yon bless'd Heav'n, my Heart runs o'er with Fondness.

Bel. Oh!

Prin. Utter't.

Bel. Oh my Husband, my dear Husband
Carries a Dagger in his once kind Bosom,

H

To

To pierce the heart of your poor *Belvidera*.

Prin. Kill thee! *Bel.* Yes, Kill me. When he pass'd his Faith
And Covenant against your State and Senate;
He gave me up as Hostage for his Truth;
With me a Dagger, and a dire Commission,
When e'er he fail'd, to plunge it through this Bosom.
I learnt the Danger, chose the hour of Love
T' attempt his Heart, and bring it back to Honour.
Great Love prevail'd, and blest'd me with Success;
He came, Confess'd, Betray'd his dearest Friends,
For promis'd Mercy. Now they'r doom'd to Suffer,
Gall'd with remembrance of what then was Sworn;
If they are lost, he Vows t' Appease the Gods.
With this poor Life, and make my Blood th' Atonement.

Prin. Heav'ns!

Belv. Think you saw what pass'd at our last parting;
Think you beheld him like a Raging Lion,
Pacing the Earth, and tearing up his Steps,
Fare in his Eyes, and roaring with the pain
Of burning Fury; think you saw his one hand
Fix'd on my Throat, whilst the extended other
Grasp'd a keen threatening Dagger; Oh! 'twas thus
We last Embrac'd; when, trembling with Revenge,
He dragg'd me to the ground, and at my Bosom
Presented horrid Death; cry'd out, My Friends,
Where are my Friends? Swore, Wept, Rag'd, Threaten'd, Lov'd;
For he yet Lov'd, and that dear Love preserv'd me,
To this last tryal of a Father's Pity.
I fear not Death, but cannot bear a Thought
That that dear hand should do th' unfriendly Office.
If I was ever then your care, now hear me;
Fly to the Senate, save the promis'd Lives
Of his dear Friends, e'er mine be made the Sacrifice.

Prin. Oh, my heart's Comfort! *Bel.* Will you not, my Father?
Weep not but answer me.

Prin. By Heav'n, I will.

Not one of 'em but what shall be Immortal.
Canst thou forgive me all my Follies past,
I'll henceforth be indeed a Father; never,
Never more thus expose, but cherish thee,
Dear as the Vital Warmth that feeds my Life.
Dear as these Eyes that weep in Fondness o'er thee.
Peace to thy heart. Farewel.

Bel. Go, and remember.

'Tis *Belvidera's* Life her Father pleads for. [Ex. severally.]

Enter

Enter Antonio.

Hum, hum, hah,

Seignior Priuli, my Lord Priuli, my Lord, my Lord, my Lord: Now we Lords love to call one another by our Titles. My Lord, my Lord, my Lord——Pox on him, I am a Lord as well as he. And so let him Fiddle——I'll warrant him he's gone to the Senate-House, and I'll be there too, soon enough for somebody. Odd——Here's a tickling Speech about the Plot, I'll prove there's a Plot with a Vengeance——Would I had it without Book; let me see——

Most Reverend Senators,

That there is a Plot, surely by this time, no man that hath eyes or understanding in his head will presume to doubt; 'tis as plain as the light in the Cucumber——no——hold there——Cucumber does not come in yet——'tis as plain as the light in the Sun, or as the Man in the Moon, even at Noon-day. It is indeed a Pumpkin-Plot, which, just as it was Mellow, we have gather'd, and now we have gather'd it, prepar'd and dress'd it, shall we throw it like a pickled Cucumber out at the Window? No: that it is not only a Bloody, Horrid, Execrable, Damnable and Audacious Plot; but it is, as I may so say, a Sawcy Plot: And we all know, most Reverend Fathers, that what is Sawce for a Goose is Sawce for a Gander: Therefore, I say, as those Blood-thirsty Ganders of the Conspiracy would have destroyed us Geese of the Senate; let us make haste to destroy them; so I humbly move for Hanging——hah, hurry durry—I think this will do; though I was something, out at first, about the Sun and the Cucumber.

Enter Aquilina.

Aquil. Good-morrow, Senator.

Anto. Nacky, my dear Nacky; Morrow Nacky, odd I am very Brisk, very Merry, very Pert, very Jovial——ha a a a a——Kiss me Nacky; how dost thou do my little Tory Rory Strumpet, Kiss me, I say Huzzy, Kiss me.

Aquil. Kiss me, Nacky, Hang you, Sir, Coxcomb, Hang you, Sir.

Anto. Haity taity, is it so indeed? with all my heart, faith——*Hey then up go we, faith——hey, then up go we; dum dum derum dump.* [*Sings.*

Aquil. Seignior.

Anto. Madona.

Aquil. Do you intend to die in your Bed?——

Anto. About Threescore Years hence, much may be done, my Dear.

Aquil. You'll be hang'd, Seignior.

Anto. Hang'd, Sweet-heart, prithee be quiet, hang'd quoth-a, that's a merry conceit, with all my heart; why, thou jok'st, Nacky; thou art given to joking, I'll swear; well, I protest, Nacky, nay, I must protest, and will protest, that I love joking dearly, man. And I love thee for joking. and I'll Kiss thee for joking, and Towse thee for joking; and odd, I have a Devilish Mind to take thee aside about that business for joking too; odd I have, and *Hey then up go we, dum dum derum dump.* [Sings.]

Aquil. See you this, Sir.

[Draws a Dagger.]

Anto. O Laud, a Dagger! Oh Laud! it is naturally my aversion, I cannot endure the sight on't; hide it, for Heaven's sake, I cannot look that way till it be gone—hide it, hide it, oh, oh, hide it!

Aquil. Yes, in your Heart, I'll hide it.

Anto. My Heart; what, hide a Dagger in my heart's-blood!

Aquil. Yes, in thy Heart, thy Throat, thou Pamper'd Devil; Thou hast help'd to spoil my Peace, and I'll have Vengeance On thy Curst Life, for all the Bloody Senate, The Perjur'd Faithless Senate: Where's my Lord, My Happiness, my Love, my God, my Hero, Doom'd by thy accursed Tongue, amongst the rest, T' a shameful Rack? By all the Rage that's in me I'll be whole years in Murthering Thee.

Anto. Why, Nacky,

Wherefore so Passionate? what have I done? what's the matter my dear Nacky? am not I thy Love, thy Happiness, thy Lord, thy Hero, thy Senator, and every thing in the World, Nacky?

Aquil. Thou! think'st thou, thou art fit to meet my Joys; To bear the eager Clasps of my Embraces? Give me my *Pierre*, or——

Anto. Why, he's to be Hang'd, little Nacky; Truss'd up for Treason, and so forth, Child.

Aquil. Thou ly'st; stop down thy Throat that Hellish Sentence; Or 'tis thy last: Swear that my Love shall Live, Or thou art Dead.

Anto. Ah, h h h.

Aquil. Swear to Recall his Doom; Swear at my Feet, and Tremble at my Fury.

Anto. I do; now if she would but kick a little bit, one kick now, Ah, h h h.

Aquil. Swear, or——

Anto. I do, by these dear fragrant Feet And little Toes, sweet as, e e e e, my Nacky, Nacky, Nacky.

Aquil. How!

Anto. Nothing but untie thy Shoe-string a little, faith and troth, That's all, that's all, as I hope to live, Nacky, that's all.

Aquil.

Aquil. Nay, then ———

Anto. Hold, hold; thy Love, thy Lord, thy Hero
Shall be Preserv'd and Safe.

Aquil. Or may this Poniard
Rust in thy Heart.

Anto. With all my Soul.

Aquil. Farewell ———

[*Ex. Aquil.*

Anto. Adieu. Why what a Bloody-minded inveterate termagant
Strumpet have I been plagu'd with! oh, h h yet more! nay, then
I die, I die, — I am dead already.

[*Stretches himself out.*

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaff. Final Destruction seize on all the World:
Bend down, ye Heavens, and shutting round this Earth,
Crush the vile Globe into its first Confusion;
Scorch it with Elemental Flames to one curs'd Cindar,
And all us little Creepers in't call'd Men,
Burn, burn to nothing: but let *Venice* burn
Hotter than all the rest: here kindle Hell,
Ne'er to extinguish; and let Souls hereafter
Groan here, in all those Pains which mine feels now.

Enter Belvidera:

Bel. My Life ———

[*Meeting him.*

Jaff. My Plague ———

[*Turning from her.*

Bel. Nay then I see my Ruin,
If I must die!

Jaff. No, Death's this day to busy;
Thy Father's ill-tim'd Mercy came too late.
I thank thee for thy Labours tho, and him too.
But all my poor Betray'd unhappy Friends
Have Summons to prepare for Fate's Black Hour;
And yet I live.

Bel. Then be the next my Doom:
I see thou hast pass'd my Sentence in thy Heart,
And I'll no longer weep or plead against it,
But with the Humblest, most Obedient Patience
Meet thy dear hands, and kiss 'em when they wound me:
Indeed I am willing, but I beg thee do it
With some remorse; and when thou giv'st the Blow,
View me with eyes of a relenting Love,
And shew me Pity, for 'twill sweeten Justice.

Jaff. Shew Pity to thee!

Bel. Yes; and when thy hand's

Charg'd

Charg'd with my Fate, come trembling to the Deed,
 As thou hast done a thousand thousand dear times,
 To this poor Breast, when kinder Rage has brought thee,
 When our sting'd hearts have leap'd to meet each other,
 And melting Kisses seal'd our Lips together,
 When Joys have left me gasping in thy Arms,
 So let my Death come now, and I'll not shrink from't.

Jaff. Nay, *Belvidera*, do not fear my Cruelty,
 Nor let the thoughts of Death perplex thy Fancy,
 But answer me to what I shall Demand,
 With a firm Temper and unshaken Spirit.

Belv. I will when I've done Weeping——

Jaff. Fie, no more on't——
 How long is't since the miserable day
 We Wedded first?——

Belv. Oh! h h.

Jaff. Nay, keep in thy Tears,
 Lest they Unman me too.

Belv. Heav'n knows, I cannot;
 The Words you utter sound so very sadly,
 These streams will follow——

Jaff. Come, I'll kiss 'em dry then.

Belv. But, was't a miserable day?

Jaff. A Curst one.

Belv. I thought it otherwise; and you've oft sworn
 In the transporting hours of warmest Love,
 When sure you spoke the truth, you've sworn you blest'd it.

Jaff. 'Twas a Rash Oath.

Belv. Then why am I not Curst too?

Jaff. No, *Belvidera*; by th' Eternal Truth,
 I Doat with too much Fondness.

Belv. Still so kind!

Still then do you love me?

Jaff. Nature, in her Workings,
 Inclines not with more ardour to Creation,
 Than I do now towards thee: Man ne'er was Blest'd,
 Since the first Pair first met, as I have been.

Belv. Then sure you will not Curse me,

Jaff. No, I'll Bless thee.

I came on purpose, *Belvidera*, to Bless thee.
 'Tis now, I think, three years w'hav' liv'd together.

Belv. And may no Fatal Minute ever part us,
 Till Reverend grown, for Age and Love, we go
 Down to one Grave, as our last Bed together,
 There Sleep in Peace till an Eternal Morning.

Jaff. When will that be?

Belv. I hope long Ages hence.

Jaff. Have I not hitherto (I beg thee tell me
Thy very fear) us'd thee with tenderest Love?

Did e'er my Soul rise up in Wrath against thee?

Did I e'er Frown when *Belvidera* Smil'd,

Or, by the least unfriendly word, betray

Abating Passion? have I ever wrong'd thee?

Belv. No.

Jaff. Has' my Heart, or have my Eyes e'er wander'd
To any other Woman?

Bel. Never, never—I were the worst of False Ones, should I ac-
know I've been too Happy, blest'd above (cuse thee.
My Sexes Charter.

Jaff. Did I not say I came to Bless thee?

Belv. Yes.

Jaff. Then hear me, Bounteous Heaven;
Pour down your Blessings on this Beauteous Head,
Where everlasting Sweets are always Springing.

With a continual giving Hand, let Peace,

Honour, and Safety always hover round her;

Feed her with Plenty, let her eyes ne'er see

A sight of Sorrow, nor her heart know Mourning:

Crown all her Days with Joy, her Nights with Rest,

Harmless as her own Thoughts, and prop her Virtue,

To bear the loss of one that too much Lov'd;

Comfort her with Patience in our Parting.

Belv. How, parting, parting?

Jaff. Yes, for ever parting;

I have Sworn, *Belvidera*, by yon Heav'n,

That best can tell how much I lose, to leave thee;

I'll part this hour for ever.

Belv. Oh, call back

our Cruel Blessing, stay with me and Curse me!

Jaff. No, 'tis resolv'd.

Belv. Then hear me too, Just Heav'n;

Pour down your Curses on this wretched Head:

With never-ceasing Vengeance; let Despair,

Anger, or Infamy, nay all surround me;

Serve me with wantings; let my eyes ne'er see

A sight of Comfort, nor my heart know Peace,

Let dash my Days with Sorrow, Nights with Horrors

As wild as my own Thoughts now, and let loose Fury,

To make me Mad enough for what I lose,

I must lose him; If I must! I will not.

Oh

Oh turn and hear me!

Jaff. Now hold, Heart, or never.

Belv. By all the tender Days w'hav'd liv'd together,
By all our Charming Nights, and Joys that Crown'd 'em,
Pity my sad Condition; speak, but speak.

Jaff. Oh, h h.

Belv. By these Arms that now cling round thy Neck,
By this dear Kifs, and by ten thousand more,
By these poor streaming eyes——

Jaff. Murther! un-hold me:
By th' Immortal Destiny that doom'd me [Draws his Dagger.
To this Curs'd Minute, I'll not live one longer;
Resolve to let me go, or see me fall——

Belv. Hold, Sir, be Patient.

Jaff. Hark, the Dismal Bell [Passing-Bell Tows.
Tows out for Death, I must attend its Call too;
For my poor Friend, my dying *Pierre* expects me;
He sent a Message to require I'd see him
Before he Dy'd, and take his last Forgiveness.
Farewell for ever.

Bel. Leave thy Dagger with me.

Bequeath me something——Not one Kifs at Parting?

Oh my poor heart, when wilt thou break?

Jaff. Yet stay.

We have a Child, as yet a tender Infant,
Be a kind Mother to him when I am gone,
Breed him in Virtue and the Paths of Honour,
But let him never know his Father's Story;
I charge thee guard him from the Wrongs my Fate
May do his future Fortune, or his Name.

Now——nearer yet—— [Approaching each other.

Oh that my Arms were Rivetted

Thus round thee ever! But my Friends, my Oath!

This, and no more. [Kisses her.

Bel. Another, sure another,
For that poor Little One you've ta'n such Care of,
I'll give't him truly.

Jaff. So, now farewell.

Bel. For ever?

Jaff. Heav'n knows for ever; all good Angels guard thee.

Bel. All ill ones sure had charge of me this moment.

Curst be my Days, and doubly Curst my Nights,
Which I must now mourn out in Widow'd Tears;
Blasted be every Herb, and Fruit, and Tree;
Curst be the Rain that falls upon the Earth,

And may the general Curse reach Man and Beast ;
 Oh give me Daggers, Fire or Water,
 How I could Bleed, how Burn, how Drown, the Waves
 Huzzing and Booming round my sinking Head,
 Till I descended to the peaceful Bottom !
 Oh there's all Quiet, here all Rage and Fury ;
 The Air's too thin, and pierces my weak Brain :
 I long for thick substantial Sleep : Hell ! Hell !
 Burst from the Centre, Rage and Roar aloud,
 If thou art half so Hot, so Mad as I am.

Enter Priuli and Servants.

Who's there ?

[They Seize her.]

Priu. Run, seize, and bring her safely home,
 Guard her as you would Life : Alas poor Creature !

Bel. What, to my Husband ? then conduct me quickly :
 Are all things ready ? shall we Die most Gloriously ?
 Say not a word of this to my Old Father :
 Murmuring Streams, soft Shades, and springing Flowers,
 Lutes, Laurels, Seas of Milk, and Ships of Amber.

[Ex.]

*Scene opening, discovers a Scaffold and a Wheel prepared for the Executing of
 Pierre ; then enter Officers, Pierre and Guards, a Friar, Executioner,
 and a great Rabble.*

Officer. Room, room there — stand all by, make room for the
 Prisoner.

Pier. My Friend not come yet ?

Father. Why are you so Obstinate ?

Pier. Why you so Troublesome, that a poor Wretch
 Can't die in Peace ?

But you, like Ravens will be croaking round him —

Father. Yet, Heaven — —

Pier. I tell thee, Heaven and I are Friends :
 I ne'er broke Peace with't yet by Cruel Murthers,
 Rapine or Perjury, or vile Deceiving ;
 But liv'd in Moral Justice towards all Men ;
 Nor am a Foe to the most strong Believers,
 Howe'er my own short-sighted Faith confine me.

Father. But an All-seeing Judge —

Pier. You say my Conscience
 Must be my Accuser : I have search'd that Conscience,
 And find no Records there of Crimes that scare me.

Father. 'Tis strange you should want Faith.

Pier. You want to lead

I

My

My Reason blindfold, like a Hamper'd Lion,
 Check'd of its Nobler Vigour; then when Baited
 Down to obedient Tameness, make it Couch,
 And shew strange Tricks, which you call signs of Faith.
 So silly Souls are Gull'd, and you get Money.
 Away, no more: Captain, I'd have hereafter,
 This Fellow write no lies of my Conversion,
 Because he has crept upon my troubl'd hours.

Enter Jaffeir.

Jaff. Hold: Eyes be dry;
 Heart, strengthen me to bear
 This hideous sight, and humble me: Take
 The last Forgiveness of a Dying Friend,
 Betray'd by my vile Falshood to his Ruin.
 Oh Pierre!

Pierre. Yet nearer.

Jaff. Crawling on my Knees,
 And prostrate on the Earth, let me approach thee:
 How shall I look up to thy injur'd Face,
 That always us'd to smile with Friendship on me?
 It darts an Air of so much Manly Virtue,
 That I, methinks, look little in thy sight,
 And Stripes are fitter for me, than Embraces.

Pier. Dear to my Arms, tho thou'st undone my Fame,
 I can't forget to love thee: prithee *Jaffeir*,
 Forgive that filthy Blow my Passion dealt thee;
 I am now preparing for the Land of Peace,
 And fain would have the charitable wishes
 Of all good Men, like thee, to Bless my Journey.

Jaff. Good! I am the vilest Creature, worse than e'er
 Suffer'd the shameful Fate thou'rt going to taste of.
 Why was I sent for to be us'd thus kindly?
 Call, call me Villain, as I am; describe
 The foul Complexion of my hateful Deeds;
 Lead me to th' Rack, and stretch me in thy stead,
 I've Crimes enough to give it its full Load,
 And do it Credit: thou wilt but spoil the use on't,
 And honest Men hereafter bear its Figure
 About 'em as a Charm from Treacherous Friendship.

Officer. The time grows short, your Friends are dead already.

Jaff. Dead!

Pier. Yes, dead, *Jaffeir*; they've all dy'd like Men too,

Worthy

Worthy their Character.

Jaff. And what must I do?

Pier. Oh, *Jaffair*!

Jaff. Speak aloud thy burthen'd Soul,
And tell thy Troubles to thy Tortur'd Friend.

Pier. Friend! Could'st thou yet be a Friend, a Generous Friend,
I might hope Comfort from thy Noble Sorrows.
Heav'n knows I want a Friend.

Jaff. And I a kind one,
That would not thus Scorn my Repenting Virtue,
Or think when he's to die, my Thoughts are Idle.

Pier. No! Live, I charge thee, *Jaffair*.

Jaff. Yes, I will Live,
But it shall be to see thy Fall Reveng'd
At such a Rate, as *Venice* long shall groan for.

Pier. Wilt thou?

Jaff. I will, By Heav'n.

Pier. Then still thou'rt Noble,
And I forgive thee. Oh — yet — shall I trust thee?

Jaff. No, I've been false already.

Pier. Do'st thou love me?

Jaff. Rip up my Heart, and satisfy thy Doubtings.

Pier. Curse on this Weakness.

[*He Weeps.*]

Jaff. Tears! Amazement! Tears!

I never saw thee melted thus before;
And know there's something labouring in thy Bosom
That must have Vent: tho I'm a Villain, tell me.

Pier. See'st thou that Engine? [*Pointing to the Wheel.*]

Jaff. Why?

Pier. Is't fit a Soldier, who has liv'd with Honour,
Fought Nations Quarrels, and been Crown'd with Conquest,
Be Expos'd a common Carcass on a Wheel?

Jaff. Hah!

Pier. Speak, is't fitting?

Jaff. Fitting?

Pier. Is't fit a Soldier, who has liv'd with Honour,
Fought Nation's Quarrels, and been Crown'd with Conquest,
B' expos'd a common Carcass on a Wheel?

Jaff. Hah!

Pier. Speak! is't fitting?

Jaff. Fitting?

Pier. Yes, is't fitting?

Jaff. What's to be done?

Pier. I'd have thee undertake
Something that's Noble, to preserve my Memory
From the Disgrace that's ready to Attaint it.

Officer. The day grows late, Sir.

Pier. I'll make haste! Oh Jaffeir,
Though thou'st Betray'd me, do me some way Justice.

Jaff. No more of that: Thy wishes shall be satisfy'd;
I have a Wife, and she shall Bleed; my Child too,
Yield up his little Throat, and all

T'appease thee —

Pier. No — this — no more!

{ Going away, Pier.
holds him.

Jaff. Hah! Is't then so?

Pier. Most certainly.

Jaff. I'll do't.

Pier. Remember.

Officer. Sir.

Pier. Come, now I'm ready.
Captain, you should be a Gentleman of Honour,
Keep off the Rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my Fate, and Die with Decency.

{ He and Jaf-
feir ascend
the Scaffold.

Come! [Takes off his Gown. Executioner prepares to Bind him.

Father. Son!

Pier. Hence Tempter.

Officer. Stand off, Priest.

Pier. I thank you, Sir;

You'll think on't.

[To Jaffeir.

Jaff. 'Twon't grow stale before to-morrow.

Pier. Now, Jaffeir! now I am going. Now; — [Executioner

Jaff. Have at thee, [having Bound him.
Thou honest heart, then — here — [Stabs him.

And this is well too. [Then Stabs himself.

Father. Damnable Deed!

Pier. Now thou hast indeed been Faithful.

This was done Nobly — We have deceiv'd the Senate.

Jaff. Bravely.

Pier. Ha ha ha — oh oh —

[Dies.

Jaff. Now, you Curs'd Rulers,
Thus of the Blood y'have shed, I make Libation,
And sprinkle't mingling: May it rest upon you,
And all your Race: Be henceforth Peace a Stranger
Within your Walls; let Plagues and Famine waste
Your Generations — O poor Belvidera!

Sir, I have a Wife, bear this in safety to her.

A Token, that with my dying Breath I Bless'd her,

And the dear little Infant left behind me.

I am sick — I'm quiet —

[Jaffeir Dies.

Officer

Officer. Bear this News to the Senate,
And guard their Bodies till there's farther Order:
Heaven grant I Die so well —

[Scene Skuts upon them.

Soft Musick. Enter Belvidera Distracted, led by two of her
Women, Priuli and Servants.

Priu. Strengthen her heart with Patience, Pitying Heav'n.

Belv. Come, come come, come, come, nay come to Bed,
Prithee my Love. The Winds; hark how they whistle?

And the Rain beats: Oh how the Weather shrinks me!

You are Angry now, who cares? Pish, no indeed.

Chuse then, I say you shall not go, you shall not.

Whip your ill-nature; get you gone then; Oh!

Are you return'd? See, Father, here he's come again,

Am I to blame to Love him? Oh thou dear one.

Why do you fly me? are you Angry still then?

Jaffair, Where art thou? Father, why do you do thus?

Stand off, don't hide him from me. He's here somewhere.

Stand off I say: what gone? remember't Tyrant;

I may revenge my self for this Trick one day.

I'll do't—I'll do't. *Renault's* a Nasty Fellow;

Hang him, hang him, hang him.

Priu. News, what News?

Officer. Most sad, Sir.

Jaffair, upon the Scaffold, to prevent

A Shameful Death, Stabb'd *Pierre*, and next, himself;

Both fell together.

Priu. Daughter.

Belv. Ha, look there!

My Husband Bloody, and his Friend too! Murther!

Who has done this? speak to me thou sad Vision;

On these poor trembling knees I beg it, Vanish'd —

Here they went down; Oh! I'll dig, dig the Den up.

You shan't delude me thus. Hoa, *Jaffair*, *Jaffair*.

Keep up and give me but a Look I have him!

I've got him, Father: Oh! now how I'll smuggle him!

My Love! my Dear! my Blessing! help me! help me!

They have hold on me, and drag me to the bottom.

ay — now they pull so hard — farewell —

[She Dies.

Maid.

Maid. She's Dead.
Breathless and Dead.

Friu. Then guard me from the sight on't:
Lead me into some place that's fit for Mourning;
Where the free Air, Light, and the chearful Sun
May never enter: Hang it round with Black;
Set up one Taper that may last a Day,
As long as I've to live: And there leave me,
*Sparing no Tears when you this Tale relate,
But bid all Cruel Fathers dread my Fate.*

Curtain Fall

[Ex. Om.]

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